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The Writings of Benjamin
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THE WRITINGS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

VOLUME IX

•The M Co. •

THE WRITINGS
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

COLLECTED AND EDITED
WITH A LIFE AND INTRODUCTION

BY
ALBERT HENRY SMYTH

VOLUME IX
1783-1788

MAZARETH COLLEGE
WITHDRAWN

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

A. P. S.	American Philosophical Society.
B. M.	British Museum.
B. N.	Bibliothèque Nationale.
D. S. W.	Department of State, Washington.
H.	Harvard University.
L. C.	Library of Congress.
L. L.	Lenox Library.
Lans.	Lansdowne House.
M. H. S.	Massachusetts Historical Society.
P. C.	Private Collection.
P. H. S.	Pennsylvania Historical Society.
P. R. O.	Public Record Office.
P. R. O. A. W. I.	Public Record Office: America and West Indies.
P. A. E. E. U.	Paris Département des Affaires Etrangères, — Etats-Unis.
U. of P.	University of Pennsylvania.
Y.	Yale University.
B.	Bigelow.
F.	Benjamin Franklin.
S.	Sparks.
V.	Benjamin Vaughan.
W. T. F.	W. T. Franklin.

Franklin's Mss. exist in several forms. He made a rough draft of every letter that he wrote; he then made a clean copy to send away, and often retained a letter-press copy. To indicate the state of the document, the following abbreviations are used: d. = draft, trans. = transcript, l. p. = letter-press copy.

1384. TO GAETANO FILANGIERI¹ (P. C.)

Passy, January 11, 1783

The letter you did me the honour of writing to me in August last came to my hands when I lay ill of two painful disorders, which confined me near three months, and with the multiplicity of business that followed obliged me to postpone much of my correspondence. I have yesterday received a second letter from you, and I now, without further delay, sit down to answer them both.

The two first volumes of your excellent work, which were put into my hands by M. Pio,² I perused with great pleasure. They are also much esteemed by some very judicious persons to whom I have lent them. I should have been glad of another copy for one of those friends, who is very desirous of procuring it; but I suppose those you mention to have sent to M. Pio did not arrive. I was glad to learn that you were proceeding to consider the criminal laws, None have more need of reformation. They are everywhere in so great dis-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1817), Vol. I, p. 121.

Gaetano Filangieri (1752-1788), an eminent Italian publicist. The "excellent work" referred to above was "*Scienza della Legislazione*." The first two volumes were published in Naples in 1780. They made a great sensation, and gave Filangieri at once the foremost place among the publicists of Europe. The above letter was, in 1873, in the possession of Prince de Filangieri Satriano, a grandson of Gaetano Filangieri. — ED.

² Chargé d'Affaires of the court of Naples. — ED.

order, and so much injustice is committed in the execution of them, that I have been sometimes inclined to imagine less would exist in the world if there were no such laws, and the punishment of injuries were left to private resentment. I am glad, therefore, that you have not suffered yourself to be discouraged by any objections or apprehensions, and that we may soon expect the satisfaction of seeing the two volumes on that subject which you have now under the press.¹

With regard to your project of removing to America, though I am sure that a person of your knowledge, just sentiments, and useful talents would be a valuable acquisition for our country, I cannot encourage you to undertake hastily such a voyage; because for a man to expatriate himself is a serious business, and should be well considered, especially where the distance is so great and the expense of removing thither with a family, of returning if the country should not suit you, will be so heavy. I have no orders or authority of any kind to encourage strangers with expectations of employment by our government, nor am I empowered to be at any expense in transporting them; though our country is open, and strangers may establish themselves there, where they soon become citizens and are respected according to their conduct. Men know, because they feel, the inconveniences of their present situation; but they do not know those that may, if they change, attend the new one. I wish, therefore, you could see that country by yourself before you carry thither the lady with whom you propose to be united in marriage.² You will then be able to form a good judgment how far the removal

¹ They were published in 1783. — ED.

² In 1783 Filangieri married Caroline de Frenzel, governess of the infanta, the second daughter of the King of Naples. — ED.

is likely to be advantageous, and may proceed on surer grounds. England has now acknowledged our independence, and the sovereignty of our government; and several states of Europe who think a commerce with us may be beneficial to them are preparing to send ministers to reside near the Congress. It is possible to establish a profitable trade between the kingdom of Naples and America. Should your court be of that opinion, and think fit to employ some one to visit our several States and take information of our productions and wants, the nature of our commerce, etc., etc., perhaps it could not find a fitter person than yourself for such a mission. I would afford you all the assistance in my power towards its due execution, and by this means your voyage would not only be without expense to you, but might afford you some profit.

1385. TO RICHARD OSWALD (LANS.)

Passy, January 14, 1783.

SIR,

I am much obliged by your Information of your intended Trip to England. I heartily wish you a good Journey and a speedy Return, and request your kind Care of a Packet for Mr. Hodgson.

I inclose two Papers, that were read at different times by me to the Commissioners; they may serve to show, if you should have occasion, what was urged on the Part of America on certain Points; or may help to refresh your Memory. I send you also another Paper, which I once read to you separately. It contains a Proposition for improving the Law

of Nations, by prohibiting the Plundering of unarmed and usefully employed People. I rather wish than expect, that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better Grace by a Country, that is likely to suffer least and gain most by continuing the ancient Practice; which is our Case, as the American Ships, laden only with the gross Productions of the Earth, cannot be so valuable as yours, filled with Sugars or with Manufactures. It has not yet been considered by my Colleagues, but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your Side, I would try to get it inserted in the general Treaty. I think it will do honour to the Nations that establish it.

With great and sincere Esteem, I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Propositions relative to Privateering, communicated to Mr. Oswald.

It is for the interest of humanity in general, that the occasions of war, and the inducements to it, should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not upon their guard, are surprised and taken. This encourages the first adven-

turers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys; thus, while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit, are diminished, so that many cruises are made, wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and, as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers, the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers, during a war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labour of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who, besides, spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers, who have been fortunate, are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them; a just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations consists

not merely in the price he pays for it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war, to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expense of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks, that, when he considered the wars made in Africa, for prisoners to raise sugars in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that, being crowded in ships, perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another, which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly dyed red. On these accounts I am persuaded, that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna, and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe, that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expense of defending them would be saved; the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe, if the inhabitants might make it without interruption, and, whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the customhouses of the nation that consumed it. And, on the whole, I conceive it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them, let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the

commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expense of maintaining them.

Article.

If war should hereafter arise between Great Britain and the United States, which God forbid, the merchants of either country then residing in the other shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts, and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hindrance. And all fishermen, all cultivators of the earth, and all artisans or manufacturers unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, who labour for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, and peaceably follow their respective employments, shall be allowed to continue the same, and shall not be molested by the armed force of the enemy in whose power by the events of the war they may happen to fall; but, if any thing is necessary to be taken from them, for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants or traders with their unarmed vessels, employed in commerce, exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to obtain, and more general, shall be allowed to pass freely, unmolested. And neither of the powers, parties to this treaty, shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy such trading ships, or interrupt such commerce.

1386. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES¹ (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, January 18, 1783.

SIR,

Agreeable to the Notice just received from your Excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock, at Versailles; and we shall endeavour to be punctual. My other Colleagues are absent; Mr. Laurens being gone to Bath, in England, to recover his Health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy. I shall bring my Grandson, as you direct. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1387. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, January 19, 1783.

SIR,

Late last night I received a note from Count de Vergennes, acquainting me that it is very essential he should have a conference with us, and requesting that I would inform my col-

¹ The following is the note from Vergennes to which the above is a reply :—

"Versailles, January 18, 1783.

"SIR,

"It is essential that I should have the honour of conferring with you, Mr. Adams, and your other colleagues, who are in Paris. I therefore pray you to invite these gentlemen to come out to Versailles with you on Monday, before ten o'clock in the morning. It will be well, also, if you will bring your grandson. It will be necessary for much writing and translating from English into French to be done. The object for which I ask this interview is very interesting to the United States. I have the honour to be, Sir,

"DE VERGENNES."—ED.

leagues. He desires that we may be with him before ten on Monday morning. If it will suit you to call here, we may go together in my carriage. We should be on the road by eight o'clock. With great regard, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1388. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, January 21, 1783.

SIR,

I have just received your letters of November 9th and December 3d.¹ This is to inform you, and to request you to inform the Congress, that the preliminaries of peace between France, Spain, and England, were yesterday signed, and a cessation of arms agreed to by the ministers of those powers, and by us in behalf of the United States, of which act, so far as relates to us, I enclose a copy. I have not yet obtained a copy of the preliminaries agreed to by the three crowns, but hear, in general, that they are very advantageous to France and Spain. I shall be able, in a day or two, to write more fully and perfectly. Holland was not ready to sign preliminaries, but their principal points are settled. Mr. Laurens is absent at Bath, and Mr. Jay in Normandy, for their healths, but will both be here to assist in forming the definitive treaty. I congratulate you and our country on the happy prospects afforded us by the finishing so speedily this glorious revolution, and am, with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. IV, pp. 31, 45. — ED.

1389. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 25. 1783

SIR,

I received the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 31st of the last Month, relative to the fresh pecuniary Aid which the King was dispos'd to grant to the Congress. I received also a second Letter on the same Subject, Dated the 16th Instant. I am extremely sensible of his Majesty's Goodness in according a new Loan to the United States of Six Millions, and I accept the same in their Behalf with the most perfect Gratitude. Considering the enormous Expence this extensive War must occasion to his Majesty I did hope to avoid the Necessity of repeating their original Request of a larger Sum; and with that View have had many Consultations & considered various Schemes with our Banker M^r Grand, for procuring Money elsewhere. This with other Circumstances occasioned my so long Delay in Answering, which I beg you would excuse. None of those Schemes proving practicable, I am constrain'd by my Orders humbly to request that the Matter may be reconsidered; and that at least Six Millions more may be added. As Peace will diminish both the King's Expence and ours, I hope this Request may be granted and that it may be sufficient for our Occasions. I am however ready to enter into and sign the Contract your Excellency mentions for whatever Sum his Majesty's Wisdom & Goodness shall think fit to direct. I inclose the Resolutions of Congress, empowering me to

borrow the Twenty Millions; in which their Sense of his Majesty's Friendship is strongly express'd.

I am, with great Respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient
& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1390. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Jan. 27. 1783.

— The Departure of my dearest Friend,² which I learn from your last Letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this Life was one of the principal Motives of my proposing to visit England again, before my Return to America. The last Year carried off my Friends Dr. Pringle, and Dr. Fothergill, Lord Kaimes, and Lord le Despencer. This has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the Ties I had to that Country, and indeed to the World in general, are loosened one by one, and I shall soon have no Attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the 11 Books, but I lost the Time in looking for the 12th. I wrote with that; and hope it came to hand. I therein ask'd your Counsel about my coming to England. On Reflection, I think I can, from my

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. An auto. draft is in L. C. — ED.

² Mrs. Stevenson, the mother of Mrs. Hewson. Her last letter to Franklin is dated July 24, 1782 (U. of P.). Upon it Franklin wrote, "this good woman, my dear Friend, died the first of January following. She was about my Age." — ED.

Knowledge of your Prudence, foresee what it will be, viz. not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall, therefore, omit that Journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take Leave of my Friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben with me, and perhaps may leave him under your Care.

At length we are in Peace, God be praised, and long, very long, may it continue. All Wars are Follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will Mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their Differences by Arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the Cast of a Dye, it would be better than by Fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when Travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when your children are all at School, make a little Party, and take a Trip hither? I have now a large House, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three Friends, and I am but half an Hour's Drive from Paris.

In looking forward, Twenty-five Years seems a long Period, but, in looking back, how short! Could you imagine, that 'tis now full a Quarter of a Century since we were first acquainted? It was in 1757. During the greatest Part of the Time, I lived in the same House with my dear deceased Friend, your Mother; of course you and I saw and convers'd with each other much and often. It is to all our Honours, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest Misunderstanding. Our Friendship has been all clear Sunshine, without the least Cloud in its Hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too

frequent Occasions to say to my other remaining old Friends,
"The fewer we become, the more let us love one another."
Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1391. TO JOHN SARGENT¹ (A. P. S.)

Passy, Jan^y 27. 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received and read the Letter you were so kind as to write to me the 3d instant, with a great deal of Pleasure, as it inform'd me of the Welfare of a Family, whom I have so long esteem'd and lov'd, and to whom I am under so many Obligations, which I shall ever remember. Our Correspondence has been interrupted by that abominable War. I neither expected Letters from you, nor would I hazard putting you in Danger by writing any to you. We can now communicate freely; and next to the Happiness of seeing and embracing you all again at Halstead, will be that of hearing frequently of your Health and Prosperity.

Mrs. Sargent and the good Lady, her Mother, are very kind in wishing me more happy Years. I ought to be satisfy'd with those Providence has already been pleas'd to afford me, being now in my seventy-eighth; a long Life to pass

¹ John Sargent, a merchant in London, and a director of the Bank of England, was M.P. for Midhurst (1754-1764) and for West Looe, 1765-1768. He lived at Halstead Place, Kent, which property he bought from Robert Ralph Foley. He died at Tunbridge Wells, September 20, 1791. Mrs. Sargent died December 5, 1792. Their "eldest son" was John Sargent, M.P. for Seaford (1790). He married Charlotte, daughter and heiress of Richard Bettesworth, Esq., of Petworth, Sussex. He died in 1830, having had six sons and three daughters. He wrote "The Mine, a Dramatic Poem" (1785).—ED.

without any uncommon Misfortune, the greater part of it in Health and Vigor of Mind and Body, near Fifty Years of it in continu'd Possession of the Confidence of my Country, in public Employments, and enjoying the Esteem and affectionate, friendly Regard of many wise and good Men and Women, in every Country where I have resided. For these Mercies and Blessings I desire to be thankful to God, whose Protection I have hitherto had, and I hope for its Continuance to the End, which now cannot be far distant.

The Account you give me of your Family is pleasing, except that your eldest Son continues so long unmarried. I hope he does not intend to live and die in Celibacy. The Wheel of Life, that has roll'd down to him from Adam without Interruption, should not stop with him. I would not have one dead unbearing Branch in the Genealogical Tree of the Sargents. The married State is, after all our Jokes, the happiest, being conformable to our Natures. Man & Woman have each of them Qualities & Tempers, in which the other is deficient, and which in Union contribute to the common Felicity. Single and separate, they are not the compleat human Being; they are like the odd Halves of Scissors; they cannot answer the End of their Formation.

I am concern'd at the Losses you have suffer'd by the War. You are still young and active enough to retrieve them, and Peace, I hope, will afford the Opportunity.

You mention nothing of my good friend Mrs. Deane, or her amiable Sisters, whom I sometimes saw with you, nor of Mr. Chambers. I hope they are all well & happy. Present my Respects to Mrs. Sargent, whom I love very much, and believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1392. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS¹

Passy, February 17, 1783

DEAR SIR: — It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. I hope, however, that you and yours continue well.

The bearers, Mr. President Wheelock and his brother, go to Holland on a public-spirited design,² which you will find recommended by many eminent persons in America.

I beg leave to request for these gentlemen your civilities and best counsels, as they will be entire strangers in your country.

With great esteem, I am ever, dear sir, your faithful, humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1393. TO JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM³

DEAR SIR,

Passy, March 6, 1783.

I received your favour of September last. It found me labouring under a painful disorder, which continued long, and

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. VIII, p. 258. — ED.

² To procure money for Dartmouth College. Jonathan Trumbull wrote to Franklin, November 9, 1782 (A. P. S.), reminding him "of the circumstances of the first institution of the University of Dartmouth in the State of New Hampshire, — that the late venerable Dr Wheelock was indefatigable in his endeavours to civilise and christianize the Indian natives, and to promote humanity, literature and piety, and for that end sought and obtained benefactions in London; . . . the Doctor's worthy son, the honorable John Wheelock Esq^r is now the President, and in imitation of his father's virtues, and to bring to perfection the institution so happily begun and prospered, is intrusted and authorized by its Trustees to sollicit benefactions in France and Holland to compleat that laudable beneficial & liberal undertaking." — ED.

³ First published by Sparks (Vol. IX, p. 493). Dr. Lettsom (1744–1815),

put me much behind hand in my correspondence. I thank you for the valuable publications that accompanied it, particularly those of your own composition, which I read with pleasure.

Our late excellent friend ¹ was always proposing something for the good of mankind. You will find instances of this in one of his letters which I enclose, the only one I can at present lay my hand on. I have some very valuable ones in America, if they are not lost in the late confusions. You will be so kind as to return it to me, after having extracted from it what you may think proper. Just before I left England, he, in conjunction with Mr. Barclay and myself, laboured hard to prevent the coming war, but our endeavours were fruitless. This transaction is alluded to in the paragraph that begins at the bottom of the first page. If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavours and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed.

I desire to be considered as a subscriber, if there is a subscription, for two sets of his works,² which I will pay for on demand. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

an eminent physician, came of a Quaker family of Cheshire origin. He was one of the founders (1770) of the General Dispensary and of the Medical Society of London, and participated in many other philanthropic projects. He published a "Life of John Fothergill," his patron, in 1783. — ED.

¹ Dr. John Fothergill. — ED.

² The works of Dr. John Fothergill, edited by J. C. Lettsom, 3 volumes, 8vo, 1783. — ED.

1394. TO ROBERT MORRIS ¹

Passy, March 7, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

With this I send you a copy of the last contract I made with this court, respecting the late loan of six millions, the terms of the loan, and the times of repayment. It was impossible for me to obtain more, and, indeed, considering the state of finances and expenses here, I wonder I have obtained so much. You will see by the enclosed Gazette, that the government is obliged to stop payment for a year of its own bills of exchange, drawn in America and the East Indies; yet it has advanced six millions to save the credit of ours. You will, I am sure, do all in your power to avoid drawing beyond your funds here; for I am absolutely assured, that no farther aid for this year is to be expected; and it will not be strange, that they should suffer your bills to take the same fate with their own.

You will also see in the contract fresh marks of the King's goodness towards us, in giving so long a term for payment, and forgiving the first year's interest. I hope the ravings of a certain mischievous madman ² here against France and its ministers, which I hear of every day, will not be regarded in America, so as to diminish in the least the happy union that has hitherto subsisted between the two nations, and which is indeed the solid foundation of our present importance in Europe. With great esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ First published by Sparks (Vol. IX, p. 494). — ED.

² John Adams. — ED.

1395. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Paris, March 7, 1783.

SIR,

I but this moment hear of this Opportunity, by which I can only send you a line to acquaint you, that I have concluded the Treaty with Sweden, which was signed on Wednesday last. You will have a Copy by the first good Opportunity. It differs very little from the plan sent me; in nothing material.¹ The English Court is in confusion by another change of Ministry, Lord Shelburne and his friends having resigned; but it is not yet certainly known who will succeed, tho' Lord North and Mr. Fox are talked of as two, they being reconciled! I cannot add, but that I am, with great Esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The Change in the Ministry is not supposed of any Importance respecting our definitive Treaty, which must conform to the Preliminaries; but we shall see.

1396. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, March 9, 1783.

SIR, Mr. Barclay, our consul-general, waits upon your Excellency with a complaint of a gross affront and injury offered to the Congress of the United States, at L'Orient, by some English merchants residing at Bourdeaux, to which I

¹ This treaty is printed in the public *Journals of Congress*, Vol. IV, p. 241, under the date of July 29, 1783. — ED.

beg your Excellency's attention, and that you would order such measures to be taken for redress as the nature of the case will appear to require. I am, with great respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1397. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, March 16, 1783.

SIR:—I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me respecting the means of promoting the commerce between France and America. Not being myself well acquainted with the state of that commerce, I have endeavoured by conversation with some of our merchants to obtain information. They complain in general of the embarrassment it suffers by the numerous internal demands of duties, searches, etc., that it is subjected to in this country. Whether these can be well removed, and the system changed, I will not presume to say. The enclosed letters may, however, inform your Excellency of some of the circumstances, and probably Mr. Barclay, our consul, may furnish others. In general I would only observe that commerce, consisting in a mutual exchange of the necessities and conveniences of life, the more free and unrestrained it is, the more it flourishes; and the happier are all the nations concerned in it. Most of the restraints put upon it in different countries seem to have been the projects of particulars for their private interest, under pretence of public good. Your Excellency has no doubt seen the bill now under consideration in the British Parliament respecting their trade with America, and will consider how

far it may be practicable to give facilities to the future trade between America and your sugar islands, as well as with France, similar to those which seem now to be projected by England. I myself wish most earnestly that France may reap speedily those great advantages from the American Commerce, which she has so well merited by her generous aids in freeing it from its former monopoly; and every thing in my power to promote that desirable end may be depended on. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1398. TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN¹ (L. C.)

Passy, March 17, 1783.

MY LORD,

I received the Letter your Lordship did me the honour of writing to me the 18th past, and am oblig'd by your kind Congratulations on the return of Peace, which I hope will be lasting.

With regard to the Terms on which Lands may be acquired in America, and the Manner of beginning new Settlements on them, I cannot give better Information than may be found in a Book lately printed in London, under some such Title

¹ David Steuart Erskine, eleventh Earl of Buchan [1742-1829], during his father's life bore the title of Lord Cardross. He made various attempts to reform the method of electing Scotch representative peers. He founded the society of antiquaries of Scotland. He was a frequent contributor to *The Gentleman's Magazine*. He corresponded with Horace Walpole, who "tried everything but being rude to break off the intercourse." He claimed Washington, whom he characterized as "illustrious and excellent" as his "cousin" and "friend." In 1792 he sent to President Washington a snuff box made from the tree which sheltered Sir William Wallace. — ED.

as *Letters from a Pensilvania Farmer*, by Hector St. John.¹ The only Encouragements we hold out to Strangers are, a good Climate, fertile Soil, wholesome Air and Water, plenty of Provisions and Fuel, good Pay for Labour, kind Neighbours, good Laws, Liberty, and a hearty Welcome; the rest depends on a Man's own Industry and Virtue. Lands are cheap, but they must be bought. All Settlements are undertaken at private Expence; the Publick contributes nothing but Defence and Justice. I should not, however, expect much Emigration from a Country so much drain'd of Men as yours must have been by the late War; since the more have left it, the more Room and the more Encouragement remain for those who staid at home. But this you can best judge of; and I have long observed of your People, that their Sobriety, Frugality, Industry, and Honesty seldom fail of Success in America, and of procuring them a good Establishment among us.

I do not recollect the Circumstance you are pleas'd to mention, of my having sav'd a citizen of St. Andrew's, by giving a Turn to his disorder; and I am curious to know what the Disorder was, and what the Advice I gave which proved so salutary.² With great Regard, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ For information concerning Crèvecoeur, see *infra*, No. 1468, p. 147.—ED.

² "It was a fever of which the Earl of Buchan, then Lord Cardross, lay ill at St. Andrews; and the advice was not to blister, according to the old practice, and the opinion of the learned Doctor Simpson, brother of the celebrated geometrician at Glasgow."—W. T. F.

In A. P. S. is the original letter from Buchan to F., to which the above is a reply. It is dated February 18, 1783, and in it the Earl writes:—

"You were entitled to a civic crown on my account a great many years ago, when, at the University of St. Andrews, you gave a turn to the career of a

1399. TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY (L. C.)

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I received with great pleasure my dear and respected Friend's letter of the 5th Instant, as it informed me of the Welfare of a Family I so much esteem and love.

The Clamour against the Peace in your Parliament would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the Attack is rather against the Minister. I am confident, none of the opposition would have made a better Peace for England, if they had been in his Place; at least, I am sure that Lord Stormont, who seems loudest in Railing at it, is not the Man that could have mended it. My Reasons I will give you, when I have, what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more, and conversing with you.

They talk much of there being no *Reciprocity* in our Treaty. They think nothing, then, of our passing over in silence the Atrocities committed by their Troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton Burnings and Devastations of our fair Towns and Countries. They have heretofore confest the War to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in Reasoning

disorder, which then threatened my life. You have, since that time, done so much, and Heaven has at last been pleased to bless and crown your endeavours with so much success, that civic crowns of a more important nature are due to you, and certainly await you, if there is any such thing as public gratitude on the face of the earth.

"Many of my acquaintances in this part of the world seem disposed to seek for an asylum on the other side of the Atlantic; and, knowing my steady attachment and affection to a people, who received my great-grandfather [Henry Erskine, third Lord Cardross, who emigrated to South Carolina.—ED.] when an exile, or rather a fugitive from his country, during the administration of Lauderdale in Scotland, have applied to me for information on the subject of settling in the United States." — ED.

than that the Mischiefs done in an unjust War should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to Plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then, without satisfying for the Injuries they have done, to have Peace on equal Terms? We were favourable, and did not demand what Justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our Constituents; and I still think it would be the Interest of England voluntarily to offer Reparation of those Injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

Let us now forgive and forget. Let each Country seek its Advancement in its own internal Advantages of Arts and Agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the Prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy Country; and England, if she has at length gained Wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her Prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable Nation. Her great Disease at present is the number and enormous Salaries and Emoluments of Office. Avarice and Ambition are strong Passions, and, separately, act with great Force on the human Mind; but, when both are united, and may be gratified in the same Object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry Men headlong into Factions and Contentions, destructive of all good government. As long, therefore, as these great Emoluments subsist, your Parliament will be a stormy Sea, and your Public Councils confounded by private Interests. But it requires much Public Spirit and Virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a Nation so long corrupted. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1400. TO SIR WILLIAM JONES¹

Passy, March 17, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I duly received your obliging letter of November 15th. You will have since learned how much I was then, and have been continually engaged in public affairs, and your goodness will excuse my not having answered it sooner. You announced your intended marriage with my much respected friend, Miss Anna Maria, which I assure you gave me great pleasure, as I cannot conceive a match more likely to be happy, from the amiable qualities each of you possesses so plentifully. You mention its taking place, as soon as a prudent attention to worldly interests would permit. I just now learn from Mr. Hodgson, that you are appointed to an honourable and profitable place in the Indies; so I expect now soon to hear of the wedding, and to receive the profile. With the good Bishop's permission, I will join my blessing with his; adding my wishes, that you may return from that corrupting country, with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as you carry out with you.

The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished. None are yet struck in hard metal, but will be in a few days. In the mean

¹ Sir William Jones (1746-1794), the distinguished Oriental scholar, was appointed in March, 1783, Judge of the high court at Bengal. The appointment long coveted by him was delayed because of his uncompromising hostility to the American war. He was knighted March 19, 1783, and in April he was married to Anna Maria, eldest daughter of Jonathan Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph. During his residence in India (1783-1794) he founded the Bengal Asiatic Society, and made numerous contributions to the "*Asiatic Researches*." The letter is printed here from Sparks, Vol. IX, p. 500. — ED.

time, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I send you one of the *épreuves*. You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottos you were so kind as to furnish.

I am at present quite recovered from my late illness, and flatter myself that I may in the ensuing summer be able to undertake a trip to England, for the pleasure of seeing once more my dear friends there, among whom the Bishop and his family stand foremost in my estimation and affection. I thank you for your good wishes respecting me. Mine for your welfare and prosperity are not less earnest and sincere; being with great truth, dear Sir, your affectionate friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1401. TO JOHN DICKINSON¹ (L. C.)

Passy, March 23^d 1783

SIR: — Permit me to congratulate your Excellency on your advancement to the Presidency of Pennsylvania, wherein I hope you may find opportunities of doing much good to your Country, the only Consideration that can make an elevated situation agreeable to a reasonable Mind.

Mr. Penn,² son of our late Proprietary, purposes going over shortly, and will do me the honour of delivering this line to you. He appears to me, in the short acquaintance I have had with him, to be an amiable young Gentleman of a promising valuable Character, and if any Recommendations of mine to your Civilities and Friendship could be thought necessary, he should have them fully. But I confine myself

¹ Then president of the state of Pennsylvania. — ED.

² John, son of Thomas Penn. — ED.

here to what regards the Family in general. They think the late Act of Assembly respecting their Lands has done them great Injustice. Not being in the Country when it was made, and being unacquainted with the Reasonings upon which it was founded, I have only been able to say that I did not believe any Injustice was intended, and that the offered Compensation had been supposed an equitable one. I have not heard that the Family was considered as delinquent in the Affair of the Revolution. But as I find it is imagined that some Suspicions of their being unfavourable to it have perhaps prejudiced the Assembly against them, and that the Warmth of the Times has produced a harder Treatment of their Interests than would otherwise have been thought of, I would beg leave to mention it to your Excellency's Consideration, whether it would not be reputable for the Province, in the cooler Season of Peace to reconsider that Act, and if the Allowance made to the Family should be found inadequate, to regulate it according to Equity, since it becomes a Virgin State to be particularly careful of its Reputation, and to guard itself not only against committing Injustice, but against even the suspicion of it.

With great Esteem and Respect I have the honour to be, etc.

B. F.

1402. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹

DEAR SIR,

Passy, March 23, 1783.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me, requesting a recommendation to America, of Mr. Joshua

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1817), Vol. II, p. 326.—ED.

Grigby. I have accordingly written one, and, having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished for, suspending or rather putting an end to hostilities, are now published; so that your "heart is at rest," and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavours with yours in "cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries"; and I may venture to assure you, that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty, to allow reciprocal and equal advantages and privileges to your subjects, would have been readily agreed to. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1403. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)
(A. P. S.)

Passy, March 24, 1783.

SIR,

I am desirous of printing a translation of the Constitutions of the United States of America, published at Philadelphia, in 1781, by order of Congress. Several of these Constitutions have already appeared in the English and American newspapers; others have appeared elsewhere; but there has never yet been a complete translation of them. That, of which I have the honour to speak to your Excellency, being an octavo volume, contains the different Constitutions of the United States, their treaty with France, and no foreign matter. I have made arrangements for this purpose with M. Pierres, who is ready to commence the impression, and I hope that your Excellency will give your approbation.

M. Pierres will need a permit from the Keeper of the Seals for printing and selling this work, after having furnished me with the number of copies agreed upon. As I strongly desire, that this translation may appear at an early day, I shall feel under great obligations to your Excellency, if you will have the goodness to request the Keeper of the Seals to send the order without delay; and, should the formalities required for the purpose demand any considerable time, to request him to authorize by letter M. Pierres to proceed with the work. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1404. TO EMMANUEL DE ROHAN¹

Passy April 6, 1783.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to address to your Eminent Highness the medal, which I have lately had struck.² It is a homage of gratitude, my Lord, which is due to the interest you have taken in our cause; and we no less owe it to your virtues, and to your Eminent Highness's wise administration of government.

Permit me, my Lord, to demand your protection for such of our citizens as circumstances may lead to your ports. I hope that your Eminent Highness will be pleased to grant it to them, and kindly receive the assurances of the profound respect with which I am, my Lord, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Grand master of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and ruler of Malta (1775-1797). — ED.

² See letter to R. R. Livingston, March 4, 1782. — ED.

1405. TO M. ROSENCRONE¹ (L. C.)

Passy, April 15, 1783.

SIR,

M. de Walterstorff² has communicated to me a Letter from your Excellency to him which affords me great Pleasure, as it expresses in clear and strong Terms the good Disposition of your Court to form Connections of Friendship and Commerce with the United States of America. I am confident, that the same good Disposition will be found in the Congress; and, having acquainted that respectable Body with the Purport of your Letter, I expect a Commission will soon be sent, appointing some Person in Europe to enter into a Treaty with his Majesty the King of Denmark, for the Purposes desired.

In the mean time, to prepare and forward the Business as much as may be, I send, for your Excellency's Consideration, such a Sketch as you mention, form'd on the Base of our Treaty with Holland, on which I shall be glad to receive your Excellency's Sentiments. And I hope that this Transaction, when compleated, may be the means of producing and securing a long and happy Friendship between our two Nations.

To smooth the Way for obtaining this desirable End, as well as to comply with my Duty, it becomes necessary for me on this Occasion to mention to your Excellency the Affair of our three Prizes, which, having during the War entered Bergen as a neutral and friendly Port, where they

¹ Minister of foreign affairs at Copenhagen. — ED.

² See the following letter, to R. R. Livingston, April 15, 1783. — ED.

might repair the Damages they had suffer'd, and procure Provisions, were, by an order of your Predecessor in the Office you so honourably fill, violently seized and delivered to our Enemies. I am inclined to think it was a hasty Act, procured by the importunities and Misrepresentations of the British Minister, and that your Court could not, on reflection, approve of it. But the Injury was done, and I flatter myself your Excellency will think with me, that it ought to be repaired. The Means and Manner I beg leave to recommend to your Consideration, and am, with great Respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1406. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (L. C.)

Passy, April 15, 1783.

SIR,

You complain sometimes of not hearing from us. It is now near three Months since any of us have heard from America. I think our last Letters came with General de Rochambeau. There is now a Project under Consideration for establishing Monthly Packet Boats between France and New York, which I hope will be carried into Execution; our Correspondences then may be more regular and frequent.

I send herewith another Copy of the Treaty concluded with Sweden. I hope, however, that you will have received the former, and that the Ratification is forwarded. The King, as the Ambassador informs me, is now employ'd in examining the Duties payable in his Ports, with a View of lowering them in favour of America, and thereby encouraging and facilitating our mutual Commerce.

M. de Walterstorff Chambellan du Roy de Dannemarck, formerly Chief Justice of the Danish West India Islands, was last year at Paris, where I had some Acquaintance with him, and he is now return'd hither. The Newspapers have mention'd him as intended to be sent Minister from his Court to Congress; but he tells me no such Appointment has yet been made. He assures me, however, that the King has a strong Desire to have a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with the United States; and he has communicated to me a Letter, which he received from M. Rosencrone, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressing that Disposition. I enclose a Copy of the Letter; and, if the Congress shall approve of entring into such a Treaty with the King of Denmark, of which I told M. de Walterstorff I made no doubt, they will send to me, or whom else they shall think proper, the necessary Powers and Instructions for that purpose. In the mean time, to keep the Business in Train, I have sent to that Minister, for his Consideration, a Translation of the Plan, *mutatis mutandis*, which I receiv'd from Congress for a Treaty with Sweden, accompanied by a Letter, of which likewise I enclose a Copy. I think it would be well to make it one of the Instructions to whoever is commission'd for the Treaty, that he previously procure Satisfaction for the Prizes mention'd in my Letter.

The Definitive Treaties have met with great Delays, partly by the Tardiness of the Dutch, but principally by the Distractions in the Court of England, where, for six or seven Weeks, there was properly no Ministry, nor any Business effected. They have at last settled a Ministry, but of such a Composition as does not promise to be lasting. The Papers will inform you who they are. It is now said, that Mr.

Oswald, who sign'd the Preliminaries, is not to return here, but that Mr. David Hartley comes in his stead to settle the definitive. A Congress is also talk'd of, and that some use is therein to be made of the Mediation formerly propos'd of the Imperial Courts. Mr. Hartley is an old Friend of mine, and a strong Lover of Peace, so that I hope we shall not have much difficult Discussion with him; but I could have been content to have finish'd with Mr. Oswald, whom we always found very reasonable.

Mr. Laurens, having left Bath, mended in his Health, is daily expected at Paris, where Messrs. Jay and Adams still continue. Mr. Jefferson has not yet arriv'd, nor the *Romulus*, in which Ship I am told he was to have taken his Passage. I have been the more impatient of this Delay, from the Expectation given me of full Letters by him. It is extraordinary, that we should be so long without any Arrivals from America in any Port of Europe. We have as yet heard nothing of the Reception of the preliminary Articles in America, tho' it is now nearly 5 Months since they were signed. Barney, indeed, did not get away from hence before the Middle of January, but Copies went by other Ships long before him; he waited some time for the Money he carried, and afterwards was detain'd by violent contrary Winds. He had a Passport from England, and I hope arriv'd safe; tho' we have been in some Pain for him, on Acc^t of a Storm soon after he sail'd.

The English Merchants have shown great Eagerness to reassume their Commerce with America; but apprehending that our Laws, prohibiting that Commerce, would not be repeal'd till England had set the Example by repealing theirs, the Number of Vessels they had loaded with Goods have been

detain'd in Port, while the Parliament have been debating on the Repealing Bill, which has been alter'd two or three times, and is not yet agreed upon. It was at first propos'd to give us equal Privileges in Trade with their own Subjects, repealing thereby, with respect to us, so much of their Navigation Act, as regards Foreign Nations. But that Plan seems to be laid aside, and what will finally be done in the Affair is yet uncertain.

There is not a Port in France, and few in Europe, from which I have not receiv'd several Applications of Persons desiring to be appointed Consuls for America. They generally offer to execute the Office for the Honour of it, without Salary. I suppose the Congress will wait to see what Course the Commerce will take, and in what Places it will fix itself, in order to find where Consuls will be necessary, before any Appointments are made, and perhaps it will then be thought best to send some of our own People. If they are not allow'd to Trade, there must be a great Expence for Salaries. If they may trade, and are Americans, the Fortunes they make will mostly settle at last in our own Country. The Agreement I was to make here respecting Consuls, has not yet been concluded. The Article of Trading is important. I think it would be well to reconsider it.

I have caused to be struck here the Medal, which I formerly mention'd to you, the Design of which you seem'd to approve. I inclose one of them in Silver, for the President of Congress, and one in Copper for yourself; the Impression on Copper is thought to appear best, and you will soon receive a Number for the Members. I have presented one to the King, and another to the Queen, both in Gold, and one in Silver to each of the Ministers, as a monumental

Acknowledgment, which may go down to future Ages, of the Obligations we are under to this Nation. It is mighty well received, and gives general Pleasure. If the Congress approve of it, as I hope they will, I may add something on the Die (for those to be struck hereafter) to show that it was done by their Order, which I could not venture to do till I had Authority for it.

A multitude of People are continually applying to me personally, and by Letters, for Information respecting the means of transporting themselves, Families, and Fortunes to America. I give no Encouragement to any of the King's subjects, as I think it would not be right in me to do it without their Sovereign's approbation; and, indeed, few offer from France but Persons of irregular Conduct and desperate Circumstances, whom we had better be without; but I think there will be great Emigrations from England, Ireland, and Germany. There is a great Contest among the Ports, which of them shall be of those to be declared *Free* for the *American Trade*. Many applications are made to me to interest myself in the behalf of all of them; but having no Instructions on that head, and thinking it a Matter more properly belonging to the Consul, I have done nothing in it.

I have continu'd to send you the English Papers. You will often see Falshoods in them respecting what I say and do and write, &c. You know those Papers too well to make any Contradiction of such Stuff necessary from me.

Mr. Barclay is often ill, and I am afraid the Settlement of our Accounts will be, in his Hands, a long Operation. I shall be impatient at being detain'd here on that Score after the Arrival of my Successor. Would it not be well to join Mr. Ridley with Mr. Barclay for that Service? He re-

sides in Paris, and seems active in Business. I know not, indeed, whether he would undertake it, but wish he may.

The Finances here are embarrass'd, and a new loan is propos'd by way of Lottery, in which, it is said by some Calculators, the King will pay at the Rate of 7 per cent. I mention this to furnish you with a fresh convincing Proof against Cavillers of the King's Generosity towards us, in lending us Six Millions this year at 5 per cent, and of his concern for our Credit, in saving by that Sum the Honour of Mr. Morris's Bills, while those drawn by his own Officers abroad have their Payment suspended for a Year after they become due. You have been told, that France might help us more liberally if she would. This last Transaction is a Demonstration of the contrary.

Please to show these last Paragraphs to Mr. Morris, to whom I cannot now write, the Notice of this Ship being short; but it is less necessary, as Mr. Grand writes him fully. With great Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Mr. Laurens is just arrived.

1407. *INTRODUCTION OF PROFESSOR MÄRTER*
(A. P. S.)

Passy, April 22, 1783.

SIR,

M. Märter, Professor of Natural History in the Service of the Emperor, being appointed to make a Collection of Plants and Animals from the four Quarters of the World, for his Imperial Majesty's Botanic Gardens and Menagerie, proposes to begin his Operations by a Journey thro' the Countries under the Government of the United States of America. He

is strongly recommended to me by his Excellency the Ambassador from that Court; and I take leave to recommend him not only to the Civilities you are pleas'd in bestowing on Strangers of Merit but to all the Assistances and Facilities your Station & the Influence attending it, may enable you to afford him in the Execution of his Commission, being persuaded that your Zeal for the Increase of Useful Science, as well as the Respect due to his August Employer, will induce you to render Mr. Mårter such Services with Pleasure. I have the honour to be very respectfully,

Sir,

Your [Excellency's]

15 Copies —

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1408. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, April 26, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received in its time your kind Letter of Feb. 22. I am sensible of the Prudence of your Advice respecting my coming to England, and shall follow it. Accept my Thanks for that, and for your kind Invitation to Cheam, when I do come; but the little left of Life at my Age will, perhaps, hurry me home, as soon as I can be quit of my Employment here. I should, indeed, have great Pleasure in seeing you, and in being some time with you and your little Family. I cannot have all I wish.

Mr. Williams is now here with his Family. I shall mention to him his not answering your Letter. We talk'd yesterday of you, and of his Friend Dolly, whom I have not forgotten,

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

as she supposes. He express'd the highest Esteem and Regard for you both. My Love to her when you see her. I send you some more of the little Books, and am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1409. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, April 27, 1783.

SIR,

The Count del Veome, an Italian Nobleman of great distinction, does me the honour to be the Bearer of this. I have not the Satisfaction to be personally acquainted with this Gentleman, but am much solicited by some of my particular friends, to whom his Merits and Character are known, to afford him this Introduction to you. He is, I understand, a great Traveller, and his view in going to America is merely to see the Country and its great Men. I pray you will show him every Civility, and afford him that Counsel, which as a Stranger he may stand in need of. With great respect, I am,

B. FRANKLIN.

1410. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 4, 1783.

SIR: — I have considered the proposal of M. le Marq. de Ségur to cede to the Congress the military stores left by M. de Rochambeau at Baltimore,¹ and I am of opinion that it is

¹ "A la réception de cette lettre, vous prendrés les ordres du Général Washington pour les dispositions qui devront précéder l'embarquement de la

probable a part of them may be acceptable, if not the whole, and that possibly some of the different States may be inclined to purchase what the Congress should not want. But as I am ignorant of what may or may not be wanted by the Congress, and have no orders to purchase or procure more stores than have already been provided here, I can enter into no agreement respecting them. If a power be sent to the ambassador or consul to treat with the Congress or the separate States concerning them, it may be the most probable means of disposing of them to advantage.

I am with respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1411. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 5, 1783.

SIR:— I have the honour to communicate to your Excellency herewith three articles proposed between Mr. Hartley and the American Commissioners respecting commerce. He has sent them to his court for their approbation. I doubt their obtaining it. But we shall see.

I am, with respect, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

légion, celui des détachement que vous commandez, de la grosse artillerie laissée à Baltimore et enfin des soldats malades qui n'ont pu suivre les réglemens dont ils font partie."— Ségur to Lauzun, Jan. 23, 1783. — ED.

1412. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 5, 1783.

SIR,

It was my intention to pay my devoirs at Versailles to-morrow. I thank your Excellency, nevertheless, for your kind admonition.¹ I omitted two of the last three days, from a mistaken apprehension, that, being holidays, there would be no court. Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay are both invalids; and, since my last severe fit of the gout, my legs have continued so weak, that I am hardly able to keep pace with the ministers who walk fast, especially in going up and down stairs.

I beg you to be assured, that whatever deficiency there may be of strength, there is none of respect in, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ In a letter dated May 5, 1783 (to which the above letter is a reply) Vergennes wrote: —

“I have received the two letters of yesterday and to-day, which you have done me the honour to write to me, and a copy of the three articles discussed between the Commissioners of the United States and Mr. Hartley. You are aware, that I shall want a sufficient time to examine them before submitting to you the observations, which may relate to our reciprocal interests. Receive, in the mean time, my sincere thanks for this communication,

“I hope to have the honour of seeing you to-morrow at Versailles. I trust you will be able to be present with the foreign ministers. It is observed, that the Commissioners from the United States rarely show themselves here, and inferences are drawn from it, which I am sure their constituents would disavow, if they had a knowledge of them. I have the honour to be, &c.

“DE VERGENNES.” — ED.

1413. TO DAVID HARTLEY (P. R. O.)

Passy, May 8, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you enclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.¹ I should be happy if I could see, before I die, the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of privateering could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to us Americans; since we are so situated on the globe, as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, &c., is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruises, while our own commerce is in such bulky, low-priced articles, as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours, and you must come far from home, at a great expense, to look for them. I hope, therefore, that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical states. I fear, lest our privateering success in the two last wars should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming, mixed blood; and, if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs, than they have been and are with the Turkish. Try, my friend, what you can do, in procuring for your nation the glory of being, though the

¹ See the Article about privateering, to R. Oswald, January 14, 1783. — ED.

greatest naval power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them, of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artisans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species. With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1414. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (L. C.)

Passy, May 16, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND:— I have before me your three Favours of Feb 26, April 8 and 29,¹ the last delivered to me yesterday by Mr. Robertson, to whom I shall show the Respect due to your Recommendation.² I am asham'd of being so long in Arrear in my Correspondence with you, but I have too much Business. I will now endeavour to answer your Letters, and hope I may be able to do it without Interruption.

I never received the Letter you mention, wherein you asked my leave to dedicate your Book to me. I should immediately have given my Consent, esteeming it a great honour to be so remembred by you, and handed down to Posterity as having your Friendship. The Cast of your Profile came safe to hand,

¹ These letters are all in A. P. S. — ED.

² "The bearer of this, Mr. James Robertson, being arrived at Paris from a tour thro Italie, after having spent some time in Vienna, where he followed my experiments and became one of my friends, has begged the favour of me to send him an introductory letter to you."—Ingenhousz to Franklin, April 29, 1783. — ED.

and gives me Pleasure, as I think it very like. Pray what is the Composition?

My Journey to Italy, and thence to Vienna, is yet an Uncertainty. I thank you however for your kind Advice respecting the Conduct of it.¹

I have long since been tired of the Acquaintance and correspondence of Mr. V.;² having but a small Remnant left of Life, I cannot afford to attend to his endless Discourse and numerous long Letters, and visionary Projects. He wants to be employ'd in our Affairs, but he manages his own so badly that one can have but little Confidence in his Prudence. I pity him however, tho' I see no possible means of serving him.

I thank you for the friendly Congratulations on the Peace, and Cautions respecting our future Conduct; they are good and wise.³

Mr. Wharton's Treatment of you gives me pain. He never writes to me. I forget whether I have already sent you the Extract of his Letter to Dr. Bancroft, so I enclose a Copy. I enclose also a part of a Philadelphia Newspaper, by which you will see that your Name and Writings are already known in our Country. With regard to your Prop-

¹ Ingenhousz advised Franklin to go to Italy through Austria "because from Vienna to the Venetian territory you have not a single difficult or dangerous road." He also advised a broad Italian carriage, — "the French carriages are in general too narrow, and the English too low." — ED.

² Rudolph Valltravers, an impecunious gentleman of Vienna who wrote interminable letters to Franklin, and constantly solicited his aid and favour in obtaining some position in Europe or America. — ED.

³ "Now you are a free and independent people, you ought to be mindfull of the old proverb, *felix quam faciunt aliena pericula cautem!* and prevent disunion among yourselves. You have had open enemies, now you will have inobservable ones." — Ingenhousz, Feb. 26, 1783. — ED.

erty in the Public Funds, I have no doubt of its being secure according to the Value it had when it was plac'd there, but I can say nothing as to the particulars of its Situation or Amount; Mr. Williams can better inform you. I have requested him to do it.

It is long since I have seen M. Le Begue.¹ He is much in the Country. I have heard nothing of the Printing of your Book.

Your Experiment of burning the Wire has been made here with the greatest Success. My grandson had it try'd at Mr. Charles' Lecture, where it gave great Satisfaction & was much admir'd.

I have not yet found Leisure to explain the Fireplace, but hope for it, when I am quit of my present Station.

I have been, as you know, so little in America for these last 25 Years, that I am unqualified to answer the Request of Mr. Veinbrenner concerning the Names and Solidity of Houses there.²

A new Set of Merchants have grown up into Business, of whom I know nothing; and the Circumstances of the old ones whom I formerly knew may have been much altered by Time, or by the War. It is besides, an invidious & dangerous Thing for me to give such a distinguishing List, if I were able to do it. My best Advice to your Commercial People is, to send over a discreet, intelligent Person, with instructions to

¹ Achille-Guillaume le Begue de Presles (1735-1807), Rousseau's physician and friend, had been requested by Ingenhousz to superintend the publication of his book in Paris, but he had not replied for a long time to any of Ingenhousz's letters. — ED.

² M. Veinbrenner, by order of Prince Kaunitz, first minister of state, had written to Franklin for information about "the solidity of merchants in America." — ED.

travel thro' the Country, observe the Nature of the Commerce, find out what of your Commodities are wanted there, and in what Quantities & Proportions; & what of the Produce of the Country can be purchased to make advantageous Returns. Such a Man on the Spot may obtain better Informations of Characters than I can possibly give, and may make the Connections desired with those that he finds to merit Confidence. If your People should think fit to take this Step, I will give Letters of Recommendation introductory of the Person, and which may be useful to their Design. Please to acquaint Mr. Veinbrenner of this, presenting my respects. I have already given such Letters at [mutilated] have received no intimation, except from you, that a Proposition for such a Treaty would be acceptable to His Imperial Majesty.¹ I shall however venture to propose it to the Ambassador when I request his forwarding to you this Letter. The Commodities you mention as Productions of the Emperor's Dominions are all wanted in America, and will sell there to Advantage.²

I will send you another Piece of the Soap you mention when I can have a good Opportunity. I now send you one of the Medals I have caused to be struck here, which has the good Luck to be much approved. [Mutilated, part of draft cut off.]

With regard to the Statuary³ you mention, I hardly think

¹ A commercial treaty. — ED.

² "The articles of exportation from this country are chiefly copper, steel, mercury, and glass as fine as English. Hungarian wines begin also to be an object. From the low countries the chief exporting objects are lace and linens." — Ingenhousz, April 8, 1783. — ED.

³ Giuseppi Ceracchi of Rome. Count Lacy, "the greatest favorite of the Emperour," requested Ingenhousz to ask Franklin whether Ceracchi "should goe over to America in expectation of being employed in erecting or making marmor and such like monuments. . . . Marechal Lacy added, that, in case

it can be worth his while at present to go to America in Expectation of being employ'd there. Private Persons are not rich enough to encourage sufficiently the fine Arts ; and therefore our Geniuses all go to Europe. In England at present, the best History Painter, West; the best Portrait Painter, Copley; and the best Landscape Painter, Taylor, at Bath, are all Americans. And the Public being burthen'd by its War Debts, will certainly think of paying them before it goes into the Expence of Marble Monuments. He might, indeed, as you hint, be easily paid in Land, but Land will produce him nothing without Labour; and he and his Workmen must [incomplete].

after a few years such an Artist may find Employment; and possibly we may discover a white Marble.

I am glad you have made the experiments you mention, and with success. You will find that the holes are not made by the impulse of the fluid moving in certain directions, but by circumstances of explosion of parts of the matter; and I still think my explanation of the holes in the vane probable, viz. that it was the explosion of tin against parts of the copper plate that were almost in a state of fusion, and therefore easily burst through either on one side or the other, as it happened. The bursting of the twelve bottles all at once, I take to be owing to small bubbles in the substance of the glass, or grains of sand, into which a quantity of the electric fluid had been forced and compressed while the bottles

there was a prospect of finding employment there, and money should be scarce, gouvernement could grant him land."—Ingenhousz, April 29, 1783. This is the only reference made by Franklin to Ceracchi, who has long been credited with the making of the bust of Franklin which is now known to have been the work of Caffieri. — ED.

were charging; and when the pressure was suddenly taken off by discharging the bottles, that confined portion by its elastic force expanding caused the breach. My reasons for thinking, that the charge did not pass by those holes you will find in a former letter; and I think you will always find, that the coating within and without is forced both ways by the explosion of these bubbles.

B. FRANKLIN.

1415. RECOMMENDATION OF A GALLEY SLAVE
(A. P. S.)

Passy, May 22. 1783

SIR,

The Bearer Pierre André Gargaz is Author of a very humane Project for establishing a perpetual Peace. This has interested me much in his Behalf. He appears to me a very honest sensible Man, & worthy of better Fortune:—For tho' his Project may appear in some respects chimerical, there is Merit in so good an Intention. He has serv'd faithfully 20 Years as a Galley-Slave, and now requests Letters of Rehabilitation, that he may enjoy for the Rest of his Life the Douceurs that State would be attended with: If this Request of his is not improper, & you can assist him in procuring such Letters You will do me a most sensible Pleasure. He will show you authentic Certificates of his good Conduct. With great Esteem, I have the honour to be,

Sir,

[B. FRANKLIN.]

[To whom it may Concern.]

1416. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 23, 1783

SIR:—I beg leave to recommend earnestly to your Excellency's attention the enclosed petition and papers from Mr. Price, an honest, worthy American, who was to my knowledge very serviceable to our army in Canada, and much esteemed by the Congress. I shall be very thankful if you can procure for him the order he desires. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, _

B. FRANKLIN.

1417. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, June 3, 1783

SIR:—Having long known Mr. Williams to be a very just man in all his transactions, I hope the favour he requests of a surséance may be granted to him, being confident that it will be employed to the complete satisfaction of his creditors. I therefore earnestly pray your Excellency to obtain it for him. With great respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1418. TO PHILIPPE-DENIS PIERRES¹ (A. P. S.)

SIR,

Passy, June 10, 1783.

I received the *Exemplaire* of the Constitutions. I intended to have waited on M. le Garde des Sceaux yesterday,

¹ This celebrated printer of Versailles, a member of the Academies of Dijon,

at Versailles, but was prevented. I shall write to him to-day. The Ratification of the Swedish Treaty is arrived, so that there is no farther Obstruction to the Publication. I desire to have 50 of the 8vos bound in Calf and letter'd, and 50 half bound, that is, between Pasteboards with a Sheepskin Back, and Letter'd, but not cut. I desire also 6 of the 4tos copies bound in Morocco. I am, with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.¹

Lyons, Rouen, and Orleans, died at Dijon, February 28, 1808, at the age of sixty-eight. At Franklin's request he instructed B. F. Bache in the principles of typography. He left an unfinished work, "*L'Art de l'Imprimerie*." — ED.

¹ Pierres wrote to Franklin, June 27, 1783 (A. P. S.), as follows: —

"MONSIEUR,

"Vous devez être étonné sans doute de ne point recevoir de ma part les exemplaires des Constitutions de l'Amérique que je vous ai promis le 20 du courant, jour que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous voir.

"En vous quittant j'ai été chez M. de Néville. On m'a montré le nouvel embargo mis sur cet ouvrage; c'est une note que M. le Garde des Sceaux a écrite à côté de la permission, la voici: 'à condition que l'ouvrage passera encore sous les yeux de M. le Comte de Vergennes avant d'être distribué.' On m'a dit qu'il étoit à propos que j'en envoyasse un exemplaire à M. le Comte de Vergennes, c'est ce que j'ai fait en rentrant chez moi: j'y ai joint la lettre dont je vous envoie copie. J'attends la réponse de ce Ministre pour la faire passer aussitôt à M. le Garde des Sceaux qui l'enverra à M. de Neville, pour enfin après tout cela m'autoriser à faire la distribution.

"Vous voyez, Monsieur, que Paris ne ressemble point du tout à Philadelphie et qu'il nous faudrait ici un second Franklin, s'il pouvoit en exister deux, pour nous délivrer de toutes ces entraves, entraves que je ne puis ni ne dois condamner, puisque je suis citoyen.

"Cela ne m'empêche pas, Monsieur, de faire en attendant relier et brocher et je serois en état actuellement de vous livrer tous vos exemplaires, si les réglemens auxquels je suis assujetti m'en donnoient la liberté. Aussitôt que je serai dégagé de toutes les entraves que je viens de vous détailler, j'aurai l'honneur de vous en faire part.

"Je suis avec un profond respect, Monsieur,

"Votre très humble et

"très obéissant serviteur

(Signed) "PIERRES."

— ED.

1419. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (D. S. W.)

Passy, June 12, 1783.

SIR,

I wrote to you fully by a vessel from Nantes, which I hope will reach you before this. If not, this may inform you, that the ratification of the treaty with Sweden is come, and ready to be exchanged when I shall receive that from Congress; that the treaty with Denmark is going on, and will probably be ready before the commission for signing it arrives from Congress. It is on the plan of that proposed by Congress for Sweden.

Portugal has likewise proposed to treat with us, and the ambassador has earnestly urged me to give him a plan for the consideration of his court, which I have accordingly done, and he has forwarded it. The Congress will send commissions and instructions for concluding these treaties to whom they may think proper; it is only upon the old authority, given, by a resolution, to myself with Messrs. Deane and Lee, to treat with any European powers, that I have ventured to begin these treaties in consequence of overtures from those crowns.

The definitive treaty with England is not yet concluded, their ministry being unsettled in their minds as to the terms of the commercial part; nor is any other definitive treaty yet completed here, nor even the preliminaries signed of one between England and Holland. It is now five months since we have had a line from you, the last being dated the 13th of January; of course we know nothing of the reception

of the Preliminary Articles, or the opinion of Congress respecting them. We hoped to receive before this time such instructions as might have been thought proper to be sent to us for rendering more perfect the definitive treaty. We know nothing of what has been approved or disapproved. We are totally in the dark, and therefore, less pressing to conclude, being still (as we have long been) in daily expectation of hearing from you. By chance only, we learn that Barney is arrived, by whom went the despatches of the Commissioners, and a considerable sum of money. No acknowledgment of the receipt of that money is yet come to hand, either to me or M. Grand. I make no doubt that both you and Mr. Morris have written, and I cannot imagine what has become of your letters. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I beg leave to recommend to your civilities the bearer of this, Dr. Bancroft, whom you will find a very intelligent, sensible man, well acquainted with the state of affairs here, and who has heretofore been employed in the service of Congress. I have long known him, and esteem him highly.

1420. TO PRINCE DES DEUXPONTS (A. P. S.)

June 14 1783

WITHOUT Information what are the Productions & Manufactures of the Palatinate & of Bavaria and their Prices of which M^r Franklin is totally ignorant, it is impossible for him to say what of them will be proper for a Commerce with

the United States of America. He can only answer in general, that America purchases from Europe all kinds of Woolens & Linnens warp & fine proper for Clothing of Men & Women; with a variety of Iron & Steele Manufactures. And she pays in Tobacco, Rice, Indigo, Bills of Exchange or Money. If the Electorates above mentioned, can furnish any of those Manufactures cheaper than France, Holland, or England, they may thereby obtain a Share of the American Commerce. But it will be prudent for the Merchants to send a discreet intelligent Man with a small Cargo of Samples of all their kinds of Goods, in order to obtain a thorough Knowledge of the Nature of the Commerce in that Country, and of the Kinds of Goods & proportions of their Quantities, that are most in demand there, before they hazard the making of large Adventures. — There is no doubt but that the Commerce of the German States will be favourably receiv'd in America, where a great many People of that Nation are establish'd. M^r F. will give it all the Encouragement that can be expected of him; but he cannot take upon him to point out and name as he has been desired the most Solid Houses of Commerce there, having been long absent from that Country, and the War having probably made a Change in the Circumstances of many.¹

¹ The above letter was written by Franklin in lead pencil upon the back of the following note addressed to him by M. le Prince des Deuxponts : —

“M. le Prince des Deuxponts s'est déjà adressé à Monsieur Franklin pour savoir si l'Electorat Palatin et le Duché de Bavière pourroient entrer en liaison de commerce avec les treize Etats unis de l'Amerique. Mais n'en ayant obtenu qu'une réponse trop vague pour être transmise à ses commettans, il le prie très instamment de vouloir bien lui spécifier par écrit quelles seroient les productions et les objets d'industrie qui pourroient le plus aisement donner de la consistance à ce projet et le faire prospérer. Il insiste sur cette réponse parce qu'on la lui demande et il se flatte que Monsieur Franklin verra d'un

1421. ON THE SHOCK BY THE ELECTRIC BOTTLE, AND THE DENSITY OF GLASS ¹ (L. C.)

Passy, June 14, 1783.

SIR,

I received some time since the letter you honoured me with, containing your hypothesis for explaining the shock given by the electric bottle, on which you seem to desire my opinion. It is many years since I was engaged in those pleasing studies, and my mind is at present too much occupied with other and more important affairs to permit my returning to them. I cannot therefore examine your ingenious hypothesis with the attention it appears to merit. You will find in a letter of mine to Dr. Lining, dated March 18th, 1755, that I abandoned my hypothesis of the greater density of glass in the middle than near its surfaces, as contributing to produce the effect, because I found the effect to be the same after I had ground that part away.

And I think you might likewise try yours by an easy experiment. Take a plate of lead twelve inches square; cover one of its sides with a coat of bees' wax, about one line thick; upon that apply closely a thin plate of lead eight inches square, so as to leave a margin of two inches all round. Electrify this composition of lead and wax, and try if you can

œil favorable l'empressement que témoignent plusieurs Etats de l'Allemagne d'avoir des rapports avec une nouvelle puissance qui est en très grande partie son ouvrage.

"Paris, le 14 Juin 1783."

Charles, Prince des Deuxponts, elder brother of King Maximilian of Bavaria, was the nephew of Duke Christian of Zweibrück, who was the husband of Franklin's esteemed friend Madame de Forbach. — ED.

¹ It is not known to whom this letter was written. — ED.

receive a shock from it; if not, you may draw thence a further argument to support your hypothesis, because the wax, though a non-conductor, is not elastic, any more than pure lead. I see you are endowed with a genius for the study of nature; and I would recommend it to you to employ your time rather in making experiments, than in making hypotheses and forming imaginary systems, which we are all too apt to please ourselves with, till some experiment comes and unluckily destroys them. Wishing you success in your inquiries, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1422. TO BARON DE STAËL (A. P. S.)

Passy, le 16 Juin 1783

MONSIEUR,

J'ai reçu la Lettre que votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 13 de ce Mois, pour me faire Part que vous avez reçu de votre Cour la Ratification du Traité conclu entre nos deux Nations: J'attens de Jour en Jour la Ratification du Congrès, J'espère que je l'aurai reçue je m'empresserai de vous en faire Part, a fin que nous puissions faire les Echanges reciproques.

Le Desir que temoigne sa Majesté Swedoise, (et dont M^{re} le C^{te} de Creutz votre Predecesseur, m'avez instruit avant son depart) d'avoir pour resider auprès d'Elle, de la Part des Etats Unis, quelqu'un qui porte mon Nom, m'honore et me flatte infiniment; ainsi que les Termes obligeants dont vous vous etes servis pour me rapeller cet desir. — Je m'empresserai de le faire connoître au Congrès, et je ne doute pas que ce Corps ne se prete a faire tous ce qui peut etre

agréable a un Souverain pour qui ils ont tant d'estime,
J qui a été le premier de l'Europe a nous offrir son Amitié.

J'ai l'honneur d'être une respectueuse Considération et
un sincere attachement, de Votre Excellence

Le très humble èt très obeissant
serviteur

[B. FRANKLIN.]¹

1423. TO CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER²
(P. H. S.)

Passy, June 18. 1783

DEAR FRIEND

I received your kind Letters of May 15. and June 7.³
and was very glad to hear of your Welfare and safe Arrival
in England. — I wish you much Success in entring again
upon your old Occupation, and should be happy if I could

¹ This letter was in reply to the following: —

“Paris, June 13, 1783.

“SIR,

“I have just received his Majesty's ratification of the treaty of commerce
concluded with the United States, which I shall have the honour to send you
as soon as it can be exchanged for the one from Congress.

“Permit me, Sir, on this occasion to repeat the request, which the ambas-
sador has made you, respecting Mr. Franklin, your grandson. He had the
honour to tell you, that it would afford the King a pleasure to have a person
residing with him, in the capacity of the minister of Congress, who bears your
name in conjunction with such estimable qualifications as young Mr. Franklin
possesses. He charged me before he departed, to repeat to you the same
assurances, and you will allow me to add, on my part, my best wishes for the
success of this matter. I have the honour to be, &c.

“LE BARON DE STAËL.”

Eric-Magnus, Baron de Staël-Holstein (1749–1802), was newly accredited
Swedish ambassador to France at the time of the writing of this letter. Three
years later he married the daughter of M. Necker. — ED.

² The trans. of this letter in P. H. S. is endorsed “copied from the original
in possession of Peter Thompson of Philad^a.” — ED.

³ These letters are in A. P. S. — ED.

be ready to return in a ship under your Care. But I have not yet receiv'd the Permission I requested from Congress, nor do I know anything of their Intentions respecting me or my Grandson, having no Letter later than the 13th of January. I am surpriz'd they did not take the opportunity of writing by you. We are here totally in the Dark as to their Opinion of the Preliminary Articles of the Peace, which we sent by Capt. Barney in the *Washington*; who sail'd from L'Orient the 17th of January, and carried with our Dispatches a large Sum of Money; we have not so much as heard with Certainty of his Arrival. I beg you will give me what Information you can of these Particulars and any others that you may think interesting to me and mine. Is it true that M^r Morris has resigned his Office, and that the Constitution of Pensilvania is to be altered in October? Was any one appointed to succeed me here, or who was intended? I never long'd so much to be at home, and am afraid that if my Discharge is delay'd I shall be oblig'd to stay here another Winter.—

I am glad to hear from you of the Welfare of my old Friends M^r. Jackson and M^r. Watley.¹ If you see them again, please to present my best Respects to them. I have still a regard for M^r. Strahan in remembrance of our ancient Friendship, tho' he has as a Member of Parliament dipt his Hands in our Blood. He was always as credulous as you find him.²

¹ Captain Falconer dined June 6, 1783, with Richard Jackson and George Whatley, at the Post Office. — ED.

² “I have been over to your old friends Mr. Strawns and find him just the same man, believes every Ly he hears against the United States, the French army and our Army have been killing each other, and that we shall be glad to come to this country again. Let these Gentlemen believe all this for I am very sure I do not.” (Falconer.) — ED.

He told me a little before I left London that there was News of a Scotch Sergeant's having alone met a party of 40 American Soldiers, disarm'd them, and brought them Prisoners into Boston. This he appear'd to believe, and may therefore well believe the Lie you mention of the French Troops & our Army killing each other. His believing such Falshoods would be Less consequence, if he did not propagate them by his Chronicle, in the last of which that I have seen there are two lying letters said to be from New York of April 13 but actually fabricated in London. In refutation of his story of our quarrelling & fighting with the French Troops I send you enclos'd part of a Pennsylvania Journal of May 7 which I wish you would give to him, and I doubt not but he will have the Candour to publish it. It will there appear authentically that the most perfect harmony subsisted between them to the last. My Grandson presents his Respects to you, as does M^r Hartley. We are all (Thanks to God) well & hearty: But I am uneasy about Barney, fearing he may be lost, and therefore beg you would as soon as possible inform me if you know anything of his Arrival. With great and sincere Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

Tell me everything you know about the Arrival & Reception of the News respecting the Peace, and whether it is true that the Articles were kept some time secret, & why; for we have received no intelligence from Government & know not what to believe or think.

To Capt. Nath^l Falconer
at the Pennsylvania Coffee House
Birchin Lane
London.

1424. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES ¹ (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, July. 4, 1783.

SIR,

I have the honour to communicate to your Excellency, by Order of Congress, their Resolution of the 2d of May. It will explain itself; and I can add no Arguments to enforce the Request it contains, which I have not already urged with an Importunity that nothing but a Sense of Duty could oblige me to use, when I see so clearly that it is painful to you as well as to me. I confide also much more in the Representation M. de la Luzerne has probably made to you on the Affair. I will only say, that from a perfect Knowledge I have of their present Situation, no Favour of the Kind from his Majesty could ever be more essentially serviceable to the United States, or make a more lasting Impression.

I send withal an Address the Congress has just made to the several States, wherein you will see the Steps they are taking to procure the necessary Funds, for answering all Engagements; in which I have no doubt they will succeed. Your Excellency will also see there, the Manner in which I have written on the Subject; and you will find that the Contract of July last was ratified, and with Expressions of Gratitude, in January last, tho' the Original Ratification is not yet come to hand

With great Respect, I am, Sir,

Your Excellency's most
obedient and most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ There is an auto. draft of this letter in L. C. It is printed by Bigelow but dated July 14. — ED.

1425. TO HENRY LAURENS¹ (P. C.)

Passy, July 6, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

We have been honoured with several of your Letters, and we have talk'd of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few Lines in my private Capacity.

Our Negotiations go on slowly, every Proposition being sent to England, and Answers not returning very speedily. Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, & brought Dispatches for us as late as the first of June. The Preliminary Articles are ratified. But General Carleton, in Violation of those Articles, has sent away a great number of Negroes, alleging, that Freedom having been promised them by a Proclamation, the Honour of the Nation was concern'd, &c. Probably another Reason may be, that, if they had been restor'd to their Masters, Britain could not have hop'd any thing from such another Proclamation hereafter.

Mr. Hartley call'd yesterday to tell us, that he had receiv'd a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our Suspicions of affected Delays or Change of System on their Side were groundless; and that they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the Journey, I could wish your Return as soon as possible. I want you here on many Accounts, and should be glad of your Assistance in considering and answering our public Letters. There are Matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an Account at present. Nothing

¹ From the original in the possession of Mr. Simon Gratz. — ED.

could be more seasonable than Success in the Project you proposed, but we have now very little expectation. Please to give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me, with sincere esteem, and Affection, Dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1426. TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON (L. C.)

Passy, July 22, 1783.

SIR,

You have complain'd, sometimes with reason, of not hearing from your foreign Ministers; we have had cause to make the same Complaint, six full Months having interven'd between the latest date of your preceding Letters and the receipt of those by Captain Barney. During all this time we were ignorant of the Reception of the Provisional Treaty, and the Sentiments of Congress upon it, which, if we had received sooner, might have forwarded the Proceedings on the Definitive Treaty, and, perhaps, brought them to a Conclusion at a time more favourable than the present. But these occasional Interruptions of Correspondence are the inevitable Consequences of a State of War, and of such remote Situations. Barney had a short Passage, and arrived some Days before Colonel Ogden, who also brought Dispatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand. We, the Commissioners, have in our joint Capacity written a Letter to you, which you will receive with this.

I shall now answer yours of March 26, May 9, and May 31.¹ It gave me great Pleasure to learn by the first, that the

¹ See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. IV, pp. 84, 107, 109. — ED.

News of the Peace diffused general Satisfaction. I will not now take upon me to justify the apparent Reserve, respecting this Court, at the Signature, which you disapprove. We have touch'd upon it in our general Letter.¹ I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that Transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their Prejudice, and none of the Stipulations were to have Force, but by a subsequent Act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complain'd of it, or you would have sent us a Copy of the Complaint, that we might have answer'd it. I long since satisfi'd Comte de V. about it here. We did what appear'd to all of us best at the Time, and, if we have done wrong, the Congress will do right, after hearing us, to censure us. Their Nomination of Five Persons to the Service seems to mark, that they had some Dependence on our joint Judgment, since one alone could have made a Treaty by Direction of the French Ministry as well as twenty.

I will only add, that, with respect to myself, neither the Letter from M. Marbois,² handed us thro' the British Negotiators (a suspicious Channel), nor the Conversations respecting the Fishery, the Boundaries, the Royalists, &c., recommending Moderation in our Demands, are of Weight sufficient in my Mind to fix an Opinion, that this Court wish'd to restrain us in obtaining any Degree of Advantage we could prevail on our Enemies to accord; since those Discourses are fairly resolvable, by supposing a very natural Apprehension, that

¹ See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. X. p. 187. — ED.

² Marquis de Barbe-Marbois (1745-1837), secretary of the French legation, at Philadelphia; minister plenipotentiary in Germany; major of Metz; President of "Conseil des Anciens"; *Conseiller d'Etat*; *directeur* in 1801; President of "Cour des Comptes"; senator (1813); *garde des Sceaux* under Louis XVIII; member of the "Académie des Inscriptions." — ED.

we, relying too much on the Ability of France to continue the War in our favour, and supply us constantly with Money, might insist on more Advantages than the English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the Opportunity of making Peace, so necessary to all our Friends.

I ought not, however, to conceal from you, that one of my Colleagues¹ is of a very different Opinion from me in these Matters. He thinks the French Minister one of the greatest Enemies of our Country, that he would have straitned our Boundaries, to prevent the Growth of our People; contracted our Fishery, to obstruct the Increase of our Seamen; and retained the Royalists among us, to keep us divided; that he privately opposes all our Negociations with foreign Courts, and afforded us, during the War, the Assistance we receiv'd, only to keep it alive, that we might be so much the more weaken'd by it; that to think of Gratitude to France is the greatest of Follies, and that to be influenc'd by it would ruin us. He makes no Secret of his having these Opinions, expresses them publicly, sometimes in presence of the English Ministers, and speaks of hundreds of Instances which he could produce in Proof of them. None of which however, have yet appear'd to me, unless the Conversations and Letter above-mentioned are reckoned such.

If I were not convinc'd of the real Inability of this Court to furnish the further Supplys we ask'd, I should suspect these Discourses of a Person in his Station might have influenced the Refusal; but I think they have gone no farther than to occasion a Suspicion, that we have a considerable Party of Antigallicans in America, who are not Tories, and consequently to produce some doubts of the Continuance of our

¹ John Adams. — ED.

Friendship. As such Doubts may hereafter have a bad Effect, I think we cannot take too much care to remove them; and it is, therefore, I write this, to put you on your guard, (believing it my duty, tho' I know that I hazard by it a mortal Enmity), and to caution you respecting the Insinuations of this Gentleman against this Court, and the Instances he supposes of their ill will to us, which I take to be as imaginary as I know his Fancies to be, that Count de V. and myself are continually plotting against him, and employing the News-Writers of Europe to depreciate his Character, &c. But as Shakespear says, "Trifles light as Air,"¹ &c. I am persuaded, however, that he means well for his Country, is always an honest Man, often a wise one, but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses.

When the Commercial Article, mentioned in yours of the 26th was struck out of our propos'd Preliminaries by the then British Ministry, the reason given was, that sundry Acts of Parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repeal'd, which I believe was really their Intention, and sundry Bills were accordingly bro't in for that purpose; but, new Ministers with different Principles succeeding, a commercial Proclamation totally different from those Bills has lately appeared. I send enclos'd a Copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the Definitive Treaty towards setting aside that Proclamation; but, if it should be persisted in, it will then be a Matter worthy the attentive Discussion of Congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar Regulation in order to force its Repeal (which may possibly tend to bring on another Quarrel), or to let it pass without notice, and leave it to its own Inconvenience, or

¹ "Othello," III, III, 222. — ED.

rather Impracticability, in the Execution, and to the Complaints of the West India Planters, who must all pay much dearer for our Produce, under those Restrictions.

I am not enough Master of the Course of our Commerce to give an Opinion on this particular Question, and it does not behove me to do it; yet I have seen so much Embarrassment and so little Advantage in all the Restraining and Compulsive Systems, that I feel myself strongly inclin'd to believe, that a State, which leaves all her Ports open to all the World upon equal Terms, will, by that means, have foreign Commodities cheaper, sell its own Productions dearer, and be on the whole the most prosperous. I have heard some Merchants say, that there is 10 per cent Difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When Foreigners bring us their Goods, they want to part with them speedily, that they may purchase their Cargoes and despatch their Ships, which are at constant Charges in our Ports; we have then the Advantage of their *Will you buy?* And when they demand our Produce, we have the Advantage of their *Will you sell?* And the concurring Demands of a Number also contribute to raise our Prices. Thus both those Questions are in our favour at home, against us abroad.

The employing, however, of our own Ships and raising a Breed of Seamen among us, tho' it should not be a matter of so much private Profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political Importance, and must have weight in considering this Subject.

The Judgment you make of the Conduct of France in the Peace, and the greater Glory acquired by her Moderation than even by her Arms, appears to me perfectly just. The Character of this Court and Nation seems, of late years, to

be considerably changed. The Ideas of Aggrandizement by Conquest are out of fashion, and those of Commerce are more enlightened and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this in our being admitted to a greater Freedom of Trade with their Islands. The Wise here think France great enough; and its Ambition at present seems to be only that of Justice and Magnanimity towards other Nations, Fidelity and Utility to its Allies.

The Ambassador of Portugal was much pleas'd with the Proceedings relating to their Vessel, which you sent me, and assures me they will have a good Effect at his Court. He appears extremely desirous of a Treaty with our States; I have accordingly propos'd to him the Plan of one (nearly the same with that sent me for Sweden), and, after my agreeing to some Alterations, he has sent it to his Court for Approbation. He told me at Versailles, last Tuesday, that he expected its Return to him on Saturday next, and anxiously desired that I would not despatch our Pacquet without it, that Congress might consider it, and, if approv'd, send a Commission to me or some other Minister to sign it.

I venture to go thus far in treating, on the Authority only of a kind of general Power, given formerly by a Resolution of Congress to Messrs. Franklin, Deane, and Lee; but a special Commission seems more proper to compleat a Treaty, and more agreeable to the usual Forms of such Business.

I am in just the same Situation with Denmark; that Court, by its Minister here, has desired a Treaty with us. I have propos'd a Plan formed on that sent me for Sweden; it had been under Consideration some time at Copenhagen, and is expected here this Week, so that I may possibly send

that also by this Conveyance. You will have seen by my Letter to the Danish Prime Minister, that I did not forget the Affair of the Prizes. What I then wrote, produc'd a verbal Offer made me here, of £10,000 Sterling, propos'd to be given by his Majesty to the Captors, if I would accept it as a full Discharge of our Demand. I could not do this, I said, because it was not more than a fifth Part of the Estimated Value. In answer, I was told, that the Estimation was probably extravagant, that it would be difficult to come at the Knowledge of their true Value, and that, whatever they might be worth in themselves, they should not be estimated as of such Value to us when at Bergen, since the English probably watched them, and might have retaken them in their Way to America; at least, they were at the common Risques of the Seas and Enemies, and the Insurance was a considerable Drawback; that this Sum might be consider'd as so much sav'd for us by the King's Interference; for that, if the English Claimants had been suffered to carry the Cause into the common Courts, they must have recovered the Prizes by the Laws of Denmark; it was added, that the King's Honour was concern'd, that he sincerely desir'd our Friendship, but he would avoid, by giving this Sum in the Form of a Present to the Captors, the Appearance of its being exacted from him as the Reparation of an Injury, when it was really intended rather as a Proof of his strong Disposition to cultivate a good Understanding with us.

I reply'd, that the Value might possibly be exaggerated; but that we did not desire more than should be found just upon Enquiry, and that it was not difficult to learn from London what Sums were insur'd upon the Ships and Cargoes, which would be some Guide; and that a reasonable Abatement

might be made for the risque; but that the Congress could not, in justice to their Mariners, deprive them of any Part that was truly due to those brave Men, whatever Abatement they might think fit to make (as a Mark of their Regard for the King's Friendship) of the Part belonging to the publick; that I had, however, no Instructions or Authority to make any Abatement of any kind, and could, therefore, only acquaint Congress with the Offer, and the Reasons that accompanied it, which I promised to state fully and candidly (as I have now done), and attend their Orders; desiring only that it might be observ'd, we had presented our Complaint with Decency, that we had charg'd no Fault on the Danish Government, but what might arise from Inattention or Precipitancy, and that we had intimated no Resentment, but had waited, with Patience and Respect, the King's Determination, confiding, that he would follow the equitable Disposition of his own Breast, by doing us Justice as soon as he could do it with Conveniency; that the best and wisest Princes sometimes erred, that it belong'd to the Condition of Man, and was, therefore, inevitable, and that the true Honour in such Cases consisted, not in disowning or hiding the Error, but in making ample Reparation; that, tho' I could not accept what was offered on the Terms proposed, our Treaty might go on, and its Articles be prepared and considered, and, in the mean time, I hoped his Danish Majesty would reconsider the Offer, and make it more adequate to the Loss we had sustained. Thus that matter rests; but I hourly expect to hear farther, and perhaps may have more to say on it before the Ship's Departure.

I shall be glad to have the Proceedings you mention respecting the Brig *Providentia*. I hope the Equity and Justice

of our Admiralty Courts respecting the Property of Strangers will always maintain their Reputation; and I wish particularly to cultivate the Disposition of Friendship towards us, apparent in the late Proceedings of Denmark, as the Danish Islands may be of use to our West India Commerce, while the English impolitic Restraints continue.

The Elector of Saxony, as I understand from his Minister here, has thoughts of sending one to Congress, and proposing a Treaty of Commerce and Amity with us. Prussia has likewise an Inclination to share in a Trade with America, and the Minister of that Court, tho' he has not directly propos'd a Treaty, has given me a Pacquet of Lists of the several Sorts of Merchandise they can furnish us with, which he requests me to send to America for the Information of our Merchants.

I have received no Answer yet from Congress to my Request of being dismiss'd from their Service. They should, methinks, reflect, that if they continue me here, the Faults I may henceforth commit, thro' the Infirmities of Age, will be rather theirs than mine. I am glad my Journal afforded you any Pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavour to continue it. I thank you for the Pamphlet; it contains a great deal of Information respecting our Finances. We shall, as you advise, avoid publishing it. But I see they are publishing it in the English Papers. I was glad I had a copy authenticated by the Signature of Sec^y Thomson, by which I could assure M. de Vergennes, that the Money Contract I had made with him was ratified by Congress, he having just before express'd some uneasiness to me at its being so long neglected. I find it was ratified soon after it was receiv'd, but the Ratification, except in that Pamphlet, has not yet

come to hand. I have done my best to procure the farther Loan directed by the Resolution of Congress. It was not possible. I have written on that Matter to Mr. Morris. I wish the rest of the Estimates of Losses and Mischiefs were come to hand; they would still be of Use.

Mr. Barclay has in his Hands the Affair of the *Alliance* and *Bon Homme Richard*. I will afford him all the Assistance in my Power, but it is a very perplex'd Business. That Expedition, tho' for particular Reasons under American Commissions and Colours, was carry'd on at the King's expence, and under his Orders. M. de Chaumont was the Agent appointed by the Minister of the Marine to make the Outfit. He was also chosen by all the Captains of the Squadron, as appears by an Instrument under their Hands, to be their Agent, receive, sell, and divide Prizes, &c. The Crown bought two of them at public Sale, and the Money, I understand, is lodg'd in the Hands of a responsible Person at L'Orient. M. de Chaumont says he has given in his Accounts to the Marine, and that he has no more to do with the Affair, except to receive a Ballance due to him. That Account, however, is I believe unsettled, and the Absence of some of the Captains is said to make another Difficulty, which retards the Completion of the Business. I never paid or receiv'd any thing relating to that Expedition, nor had any other Concern in it, than barely ordering the *Alliance* to join the Squadron, at M. de Sartine's Request. I know not whether the other Captains will not claim a Share in what we may obtain from Denmark, tho' the Prizes were made by the *Alliance*, when separate from the Squadron. If so, that is another Difficulty in the way of making Abatement in our Demand, without their Consent.

I am sorry to find, that you have Thoughts of quitting the Service. I do not think your Place can be easily well supply'd. You mention, that an entire new Arrangement, with respect to foreign Affairs, is under Consideration. I wish to know whether any Notice is likely to be taken in it of my Grandson. He has now gone through an Apprenticeship of near seven Years in the ministerial Business, and is very capable of serving the States in that Line, as possessing all the Requisites of Knowledge, Zeal, Activity, Language, and Address. He is well lik'd here, and Count de Vergennes has express'd to me in warm Terms his very good Opinion of him. The late Swedish Ambassador, Count de Creutz, who has gone home to be Prime Minister, desir'd I would endeavour to procure his being sent to Sweden, with a public Character, assuring me, that he should be glad to receive him there as our Minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the King. The present Swedish Ambassador has also propos'd the same thing to me, as you will see by a Letter of his, which I enclose.¹ One of the Danish Ministers, M. Walterstorff, who will probably be sent in a public Character to Congress, has also express'd his Wish, that my Grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my Custom to solicit Employments for myself, or any of my Family, and I shall not do it in this Case. I only hope, that if he is not to be employ'd in your new Arrangement, I may be inform'd of it as soon as possible, that, while I have Strength left for it, I may accompany him in a Tour to Italy, returning thro' Germany, which I think he may make to more Advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promis'd to afford him, as a Reward for his faithful Service, and his tender filial Attachment to me.

¹ See letter to Baron de Staël, June 16, 1783. — ED.

July 25. While I was writing the above, M. Walterstorff came in, and deliver'd me a Pacquet from M. de Rosenkrone, the Danish Prime Minister, containing the Project of the Treaty with some proposed Alterations, and a Paper of Reasons in support of them. Fearing that we should not have time to copy them, I send herewith the Originals, relying on his Promise to furnish me with Copies in a few Days. He seemed to think, that the Interest of the Merchants is concern'd in the immediate Conclusion of the Treaty, that they may form their Plans of Commerce, and wish'd to know whether I did not think my general Power, above mentioned, sufficient for that purpose. I told him, I thought a particular Commission more agreeable to the Forms; but, if his Danish Majesty would be content for the present with the general Authority, formerly given me, I believ'd I might venture to act upon it, reserving, by a separate Article, to Congress a Power of shortning the Term, in Case any Part of the Treaty should not be to their mind, unless the Alteration of such Part should hereafter be agreed on.

The Prince de Deux-Ponts was lately at Paris, and apply'd to me for Information respecting a Commerce which is desired between the Electorate of Bavaria and America.¹ I have it also from a good Hand at the Court of Vienna,² that the Emperor is desirous of establishing a Commerce with us from Trieste as well as Flanders, and would make a Treaty with us, if propos'd to him. Since our Trade is laid open, and no longer a Monopoly to England, all Europe seems desirous of sharing in it, and for that purpose to cultivate our Friendship. That it may be better known everywhere, what sort of People, and what kind of Government they will have to

¹ See letter to Prince des Deuxponts, June 14, 1783. — ED.

² Dr. Jan Ingenhousz. — ED.

treat with, I prevailed with a Friend, the Duc de Rochefoucauld, to translate our Book of Constitutions into French, and I presented Copies to all the foreign Ministers. I send you one herewith. They are much admired by the Politicians here, and it is thought will induce considerable Emigrations of substantial People from different Parts of Europe to America. It is particularly a Matter of Wonder, that, in the Midst of a cruel War raging in the Bowels of our Country, our Sages should have the Firmness of Mind to sit down calmly and form such compleat Plans of Government. They add considerably to the Reputation of the United States.

I have mentioned above the Port of Trieste, with which we may possibly have a Commerce, and I am told that many useful Productions and Manufactures of Hungary may be had extreamly cheap there. But it becomes necessary first to consider how our Mediterranean Trade is to be protected from the Corsaires of Barbary. You will see by the enclos'd Copy of a Letter I receiv'd from Algiers, the Danger two of our Ships escap'd last Winter. I think it not improbable that those Rovers may be privately encouraged by the English to fall upon us, to prevent our Interference in the Carrying Trade; for I have in London heard it is a Maxim among the Merchants, that, if *there were no Algiers, it would be worth England's while to build one*. I wonder, however, that the rest of Europe do not combine to destroy those Nests, and secure Commerce from their future Piracies.

I made the Grand Master of Malta a Present of one of our Medals in Silver, writing him a Letter, of which I enclose a Copy;¹ and I believe our People will be kindly receiv'd in

¹ See letter to Emmanuel Rohan, grand master of Malta, April 6, 1783.—
ED.

his Ports; but that is not sufficient; and perhaps, now we have Peace, it will be proper to send Ministers, with suitable Presents, to establish a Friendship with the Emperor of Morocco, and the other Barbary States, if possible. Mr. Jay will inform you of some Steps, that have been taken by a Person at Alicant, without Authority, towards a Treaty with that Emperor. I send you herewith a few more of the above-mentioned Medals, which have given great Satisfaction to this Court and Nation. I should be glad to know how they are lik'd with you.

Our People, who were Prisoners in England, are now all discharg'd. During the whole War, those who were in Forton prison, near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable Care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian Minister there, who spared no Pains to assist them in their Sickness and Distress, by procuring and distributing among them the Contributions of good Christians, and prudently dispensing the Allowance I made them, which gave him a great deal of trouble, but he went through it chearfully. I think some public Notice should be taken of this good Man. I wish the Congress would enable me to make him a Present, and that some of our Universities would confer upon him the Degree of Doctor.¹

The Duke of Manchester, who has always been our Friend in the House of Lords, is now here as Ambassador from Eng-

¹ This suggestion was not overlooked. Congress sent him a vote of thanks for his humane and benevolent attention to the American prisoners, which was conveyed to him in a letter from the President. The degree of Doctor in Divinity was conferred upon him by the College at Princeton, in New Jersey. See letter to Hodgson, Dec. 10, 1783.

Dr. Thomas Wren died at Portsmouth, on the 30th of October, 1787, at the age of sixty-three. A well-written obituary notice of him is contained in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for November of that year. — ED.

land. I dine with him to-day, (26th,) and, if any thing of Importance occurs, I will add it in a Postscript. Be pleased to present my dutiful Respects to the Congress, assure them of my most faithful Services, and believe me to be, with great and sincere Esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1427. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

À Passy, ce 24 Juillet, 1783.

M. Franklin a l'honneur d'envoyer à Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes un exemplaire des Constitutions des États Unis de l'Amérique, qu'il le prie de vouloir bien accepter.

M. Franklin prend la liberté d'envoyer en même temps ceux destinés pour le Roi et la Famille Royale; et il prie Monsieur le Comte de Vergennes de vouloir bien les faire parvenir à leur destination, suivant la forme qui lui paroitra convenable.

1428. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS (L. C.)

Passy, July 27, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden,¹ and esteem myself much honoured by your friendly Remembrance.

¹ Sir Charles Blagden (1748-1820), a physician who entered the army as a medical officer. He was elected F. R. S. in 1772, and succeeded Matthew Maty, as secretary of the Royal Society, May 5, 1784, a post of honour for which he was indebted to his lifelong friend, Sir Joseph Banks. "Blagden, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "is a delightful fellow." He died suddenly in Paris at the house of the chemist Berthollet. — ED.

I have been too much and too closely engaged in public Affairs, since his being here, to enjoy all the Benefit of his Conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more Leisure, and to spend a part of it in those Studies, that are much more agreeable to me than political Operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of Peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that Mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable Creatures, have Reason and Sense enough to settle their Differences without cutting Throats; for, in my opinion, *there never was a good War, or a bad Peace*. What vast additions to the Conveniences and Comforts of Living might Mankind have acquired, if the Money spent in Wars had been employed in Works of public utility! What an extension of Agriculture, even to the Tops of our Mountains: what Rivers rendered navigable, or joined by Canals: what Bridges, Aqueducts, new Roads, and other public Works, Edifices, and Improvements, rendering England a compleat Paradise, might have been obtained by spending those Millions in doing good, which in the last War have been spent in doing Mischief; in bringing Misery into thousands of Families, and destroying the Lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical Discoveries made by our Society.¹ Furnished as all Europe now is with Academies of Science, with nice Instruments and the Spirit of Experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no Conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon,

¹ The Royal Society. — ED.

since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known 100 years hence.

I wish continued success to the Labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their Chair; being, with the highest esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast Globe sent up into the Air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

1429. NOTE BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN UPON A
LETTER ADDRESSED TO HIM BY THOMAS
BARCLAY, JULY 28, 1783¹ (P. A. E. E. U.)

WHEN the Ship *Alliance* belonging to the Congress was at l'Orient, under the Command of Capt. Jones, Moylan and C^o Merchants there, were appointed to supply the Ship with what was necessary during her stay.

¹ The letter upon which the above is written is as follows: —

“Auteuil 28 July 1783.

“SIR,

“I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I received last post a Letter from Mess^{rs} Schweighauser and Dobrée of Nantes under whose care the Arsenal belonging to the United States is placed, informing me that their Partner at L'Orient Mess^{rs} Puchelberg and C^o, had some months ago laid an attachment on all the Arms and other Military supplies under the Care of Mess^{rs} Schweighauser and Dobrée.

“I need not inform your Excellency of the nature of the transaction, as it fell immediately under your own inspection, but I beg leave to say that unless Government passes some signal Censure on those persons who have brought the Execution my office will be embarrass'd beyond description.

“I beg Sir you will lay the matter in its proper light before the Ministers,

Capt. Landais taking Possession of the Ship surreptitiously in the absence of Capt. Jones, apply'd to one Puchelberg, a Commis of M^r Schweighauser, for some Provisions, who not only *without* Orders either from me or Mr Schweighauser, but *contrary* to express Orders from both, furnished the same, pretending that Landais demanded them in the name and on Account of the Navy-Board of Boston.

Payment was afterwards demanded of me, which I refus'd, referring the Matter to the said Navy-Board. It was also demanded of his Employer Schweighauser, who it seems refus'd also, probably because the Disbursement was made contrary to Orders.

This Man, Puchelberg, has on this Account, arrested the Property of the United States, in whose Hands soever he could find any.

The Consul of the States complains of it as an Injury, and an Insult. And it is certain, that great Inconveniencies will follow, if such Proceedings are permitted, and if every man who pretends a Demand against any Foreign Power, however ill-founded, may arrest the Effects of that Power in France; for so the arms, ammunition, Clothing, &c., purchased in France, and depended on for important Operations of Government, may be stopt by any private Person, perhaps under Direction of an Enemy, and those Operations defeated; and the United States can never hereafter with safety make any such Purchases in France.

and obtain as soon as possible the dismission of this attachment and of those laid on the *Alliances* prize money.

"These attachments have been held in suspence several months to the great detriment of the Public business under my care, and at the imminent risk of a heavy loss in the final payment.

"I have the honor to be etc,

"THO^s. BARCLAY." — ED.

It is therefore submitted to consideration, whether the said arrests ought not only to be immediately discharg'd, but the Arrester punish'd for his Insolence.

B. F.

1430. TO CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER

(P. H. S.)

Passy, July 28, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your favour of the 18th.¹

Capt. Barney brought us the Dispatches we so long expected. — Mr. Deane as you observe is lost: Dr. Bancroft is I believe steady to the Interest of his Country, and will make an agreeable passenger if you can take him. You desire to know something of the State of Affairs here. Everything goes well with respect to this Court & the other Friendly Powers. What England is doing, or means to do; or why the Definitive Treaty is so long delay'd, I know perhaps less than you do; as, being in that Country, you may have Opportunities of hearing more than I can. For myself I am at present as hearty & well as I have been these many years; and as happy as a Man can be where everybody strives to make him so.

The French are an amiable People to live with: They love me, & I love them. Yet I do not feel myself at home, & I wish to die in my own Country. — Barney will sail this Week without Despatches. A good voyage to you, my friend; and may God bless you.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ In A. P. S. — ED.

1431. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, August 16, 1783.

SIR,

I have the honour to inform your Excellency, that the English ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made, either by us or by their minister here; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair. I am, with respect, Sir, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1432. TO HENRY LAURENS¹ (L. L.)

Passy, Aug. 21. 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I do not doubt but you have written to some one or other of your Colleagues since your Arrival in England: and as we have heard nothing from you, I thought it necessary by a Line to inform you that none of your Letters are come to Hand.

After making and sending over many Propositions of ours and of M^r Hartley's, and long Delays of Answers, it is come finally to this, that the Ministers propose our signing as a Definitive Treaty the Preliminary Articles, with no Alteration

¹ Then at Bath. — ED.

or Addition, except a Paragraph of Preamble setting forth that the following Articles had been agreed to & a concluding Paragraph confirming them. Thus I suppose the Affair will be concluded. Wishing Health & Happiness to you & yours; I am ever, with sincere & great Esteem, Dear Sir,

Your most obed. hum. Servt.

B. FRANKLIN.

1433. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS (U. of P.)

Passy, Aug. 30. 1783.

SIR,

On Wednesday the 27th Instant, the new aerostatic Experiment, invented by Mess^{rs} Mongolfier of Annonay¹ was repeated by M^r. Charles; Professor of Experimental Philosophy at Paris.

A hollow Globe 12 feet diameter was formed of what is called in England Oiled Silk, here Taffetas *gommée*, the Silk being impregnated with a Solution of Gum-elastic in Lint-seed Oil, as is said. The Parts were sewed together while wet with the Gum, and some of it was afterwards passed over the Seams, to render it as tight as possible.

It was afterwards filled with the inflammable Air that is produced by pouring Oil of Vitriol upon Filings of Iron, when it was found to have a Tendency upwards so strong as to be capable of lifting a Weight of 39 Pounds, exclusive of its own weight which was 25 lb, and the Weight of the Air contain'd.

It was brought early in the Morning to the *Champ de Mars*,

¹ Stephen and Joseph Montgolfier, sons of Peter Montgolfier, a paper maker at Annonay. — ED.

a Field in which Reviews are sometimes made, lying between the Military School and the River. There it was held down by a Cord, till 5 in the Afternoon, when it was to be let loose. Care was taken before the Hour to replace what Portion had been lost of the inflammable Air, or of its Force, by injecting more.

It is supposed that not less than 50,000 People were assembled to see the Experiment. The Champ de Mars being surrounded by Multitudes, and vast Numbers on the opposite Side of the River.

At 5 o Clock Notice was given to the Spectators by the Firing of two Cannon, that the Cord was about to be cut. And presently the Globe was seen to rise, and that as fast as a Body of 12 feet diameter with a force only of 39 pounds, could be suppos'd to move the resisting Air out of its way. There was some Wind, but not very strong. A little Rain had wet it, so that it shone, and made an agreeable Appearance. It diminish'd in Apparent Magnitude as it rose, till it enter'd the Clouds, when it seem'd to me scarce bigger than an Orange, and soon after became invisible, the Clouds concealing it.

The Multitude separated, all well satisfied & much delighted with the Success of the Experiment, and amusing one another with Discourses of the various Uses it may possibly be apply'd to, among which many were very extravagant. But possibly it may pave the Way to some Discoveries in Natural Philosophy of which at present we have no Conception.

A Note secur'd from the Weather had been affix'd to the Globe, signifying the Time & Place of its Departure, and praying those who might happen to find it, to send an Account

of its State to certain Persons at Paris. No News was heard of it till the next Day, when Information was receiv'd, that it fell a little after 6 oClock at Gonesse, a Place about 4 Leagues distance; and that it was rent open, and some say had Ice in it. It is suppos'd to have burst by the Elasticity of the contain'd Air when no longer compress'd by so heavy an Atmosphere.

One of 38 feet Diameter is preparing by M. Mongolfier himself at the Expence of the Academy, which is to go up in a few Days. I am told it is constructed of Linen & Paper, and is to be filled with a different Air, not yet made public, but cheaper than that produc'd by the Oil of Vitriol of which 200 Paris Pints were consum'd in filling the other.

It is said that for some Days after its being fill'd, the Ball was found to lose an eighth Part of its Force of Levity in 24 Hours: Whether this was from Imperfection in the Tightness of the Ball, or a Change in the Nature of the Air, Experiments may easily discover.

I thought it my Duty, Sir, to send an early Account of this extraordinary Fact, to the Society which does me the honour to reckon me among its Members; and I will endeavour to make it more perfect, as I receive farther Information.

With great Respect, I am, Sir,

[B. FRANKLIN.]

P. S.

Since writing the above, I am favour'd with your kind Letter of the 25th I am much oblig'd to you for the Care you have taken to forward the Transactions, as well as to the Council for so readily ordering them on Application. — Please to accept and present my Thanks.

I just now learn, that some Observers say, the Ball was 150

seconds in rising, from the Cutting of the Cord till hid in the Clouds; that its height was then about 500 Toises, but, mov'd out of the Perpendicular by the Wind, it had made a Slant so as to form a Triangle, whose base on the Earth was about 200 Toises. It is said the Country people who saw it fall were frightened, conceiv'd from its bounding a little when it touch'd the Ground, that there was some living Animal in it, and attack'd it with Stones and Knives, so that it was much mangled; but it is now brought to Town & will be repaired. —

The great one of M. Mongolfier, is to go up as is said, from Versailles, in about 8 or 10 Days. It is not a Globe but of a different form, more convenient for penetrating the Air. It contains 50,000 cubic Feet, and is supposed to have a Force of Levity equal to 1500 pounds weight. A Philosopher here, M. Pilatre de Rozier, has seriously apply'd to the Academy for Leave to go up with it, in order to make some Experiments. He was complimented on his Zeal and Courage for the Promotion of Science, but advis'd to wait till the Management of these Balls was made by Experience more certain & safe. They say the filling of it in M. Mongolfier's Way will not cost more than half a Crown. One is talk'd of to be 110 feet Diameter. Several Gentlemen have ordered small ones to be made for their Amusement; one has ordered four of 15 feet diameter each; I know not with what Purpose; but such is the present Enthusiasm for promoting & improving this Discovery, that probably we shall soon make considerable Progress in the Art of constructing and Using the Machines. —

Among the Pleasantries Conversation produces on this Subject, some suppose Flying to be now invented, and that

since Men may be supported in the Air, nothing is wanted but some light handy Instruments to give and direct Motion. Some think Progressive Motion on the Earth may be advanc'd by it, and that a Running Footman or a Horse slung & suspended under such a Globe so as to leave no more of Weight pressing the Earth with their Feet, than perhaps 8 or 10 Pounds, might with a fair Wind run in a straight Line across Countries as fast as that Wind, and over Hedges, Ditches, & even Waters. It has been even fancied that in time People will keep such Globes anchored in the Air, to which by Pullies they may draw up Game to be preserved in the Cool, & Water to be frozen when Ice is wanted. And that to get Money, it will be contrived to give People an extensive view of the Country, by running them upon an Elbow Chair a Mile high for a Guinea, &c. &c.

[A Pamphlet is printing in which we are to have a full and perfect Account of the Experiments hitherto made, & I will send it to you. M. Mongolfier's Air to fill the Globe has hitherto been kept secret. Some suppose it to be only common Air heated by passing thro' the Flame of burning Straw, & thereby extreamly rarified. If so its Levity will soon be diminished by Condensation when it comes into the cooler Regions above.

Sept. 2d. — I add this paper just now given me, B. F. The print contains a view of Champ de Mars, and the ball in the air with this subscription:

Experience de la machine aérostatique de M^{essrs.} de Montgolfier, d'Anonai en Vivarais, réépétée à Paris le 27 Août. 1783 au Champ de Mars, avec un ballon de taffetas enduit de gomme elastique, de 36 pieds 6 onces de circonference. Le ballon plein d'air inflammable a été executé par Mons.

Robert, en vertu d'une souscription nationale, sous la direction de Mr. Faujas de Saint Fond (et M. Charles).

N. B. — M. Charles' name is wrote with pen, not engraved.

Calculus du Ballon do 12 pieds de diametre enlevé le Mercredy 27 Août 1783.

Circonference du grand cercle . . .	37	pieds
Diametre	12	
	74	
	37	
Surface	444	
Tiers du rayon	2	
Solidite	888	pieds cubes
Air atm. à 12 gros le pied	12	
	1776	
	888	
Pesanteur de l'air atm.	10,656	gros

$$\begin{array}{r} 26 \\ 25, \\ 6 \end{array} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} 8 \\ 1332 \\ 52 \end{array} \right. \text{ ounces } \frac{16}{83} \text{ lb., 4 ounces.}$$

L'air atmospherique dont le ballon occupait la place, pesant 83 lb. 4 onces et sa force pour s'élever étant de 40 lb. il falloit que son enveloppe et l'air inflammable qu'elle contenoit ne pesassent que 42 lb. 4 onces. L'enveloppe en pesoit 25, reste pour l'air inflammable 18 lb. 4 onces.

En supposant le ballon de 6 pieds de diametre, son volume étant le 8me, du ier le poids de l'air dont il occupoit la place seroit le 8me, de 83 lb., 4 onces = 10 lb., 6 onces, 4 gros.

L'air inflammable $\frac{1}{8}$ de 18 lb., 4 onces = 2 lb., 4 onces, 4 gros.
 L'enveloppe $\frac{1}{4}$ de 25 lb., = 6 lb., 4 onces. Les dernières valeurs reunies sont 8 lb., 8 onces, 4 gros, qui otès de 10 lb., 6 onces, 4 gros pesanteur de l'air atmospherique dont le ballon occupoit la place, laisse pour sa force d'elevation 1 lb., 14 onces.]¹

¹ The paragraphs in brackets are not found in the draft in U. of P., but they exist in a letter press copy now owned (March, 1906) by Dodd, Mead & Co. To this letter Sir Joseph Banks wrote in reply, September 13, 1783 (A. P. S.) : —

“DEAR SIR,

“The having it in my power to answer with precision the numerous questions which are asked me by all sorts of people concerning the aërostatique experiment which such as they may be are suggested by every newspaper now printed here and considered as a part of my duty to answer is an obligation for which I am indebted to you and an obligation of no small extent I consider it. I lament that the vacation of the Royal Society will not permit me to lay your paper before them as a Body immediately ; but it shall be the first thing they see when we meet again as the conciseness & intelligence, with which it is drawn up, preclude the hopes of any thing more satisfactory being receiv'd.

“Most agreeable are the hopes you give me of continuing to communicate on this most interesting subject. I consider the present day, which has opened a road into the air, as an epoche from whence a rapid increase of the stock of real knowledge with which the human species is furnish'd must take its date; and the more immediate effect it will have upon the concerns of mankind greater than any thing since the invention of shipping which opened our way upon the face of the water from land to land. If the rough effort which has now been made meets with the improvement that other sciences have done we shall see it used as a counterpoise to absolute gravity a broad-wheeld waggon travelling with 2 only instead of 8 horses the breed of that Rival animal in course diminishd & the human species increas'd in proportion.

“I have thought as soon as I return from my present banishment of constructing one and sending it up for the purpose of an electrical kite a use to which it seem particularly adapted. Be pleased to direct your Favors to Soho Square ; they are sent to me without delay wherever I am. Believe me, your obliged & obedient servant JOS: BANKS.”

Sir Joseph Banks's letters are almost entirely without punctuation. He seems to have been especially hostile to the comma. Like Timothy Dexter he might have filled a page with miscellaneous points and invited his readers “to pepper the dish to suit themselves.” — ED.

1434. TO ELIAS BOUDINOT¹ (D. S. W.)

Passy, August 31, 1783.

SIR,

After a continued course of treating for nine months, the English ministry have at length come to a resolution to lay aside, for the present, all the new propositions, that have been made and agreed to, their own as well as ours; and they offer to sign again as a Definitive Treaty, the articles of November the 30th, 1782, the ratifications of which have already been exchanged. We have agreed to this, and on Wednesday next, the third of September, it will be signed, with all the definitive treaties, establishing a general peace, which may God long continue. I am, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1435. TO CHARLES J. FOX (L. C.)

Passy, Sept. 5, 1783.

SIR,

I received in its time the letter you did me the honour of writing to me by Mr. Hartley; and I cannot let him depart without expressing my satisfaction in his conduct towards us, and applauding the prudence of that choice, which sent us a man possessed of such a spirit of conciliation, and of all that frankness, sincerity, and candor, which naturally produce confidence, and thereby facilitate the most difficult negotiations. Our countries are now happily at peace, on which I congratulate you most cordially; and I beg you to be assured,

¹ President of Congress. — ED.

that as long as I have any concern in public affairs, I shall readily and heartily concur with you in promoting every measure that may tend to promote the common felicity. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.¹

1436. TO DAVID HARTLEY² (P. C.)

Passy, Sept. 6, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed is my letter to Mr. Fox. I beg you wou'd assure him, that my expressions of Esteem for him are not mere professions. I really think him a *Great* Man, and I cou'd not think so, if I did not think he was at bottom, and wou'd prove himself a *good* one. Guard him against mistaken notions of the American people. You have deceived yourselves too long with vain expectations of reaping advantage

¹ The above letter was written in acknowledgment of the following letter from Charles James Fox, April 19, 1783: —

“SIR,

“Although it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honour of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you, that he has the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's ministers upon the subject of his mission.

“Permit me, Sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you how happy I should esteem myself, if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of completing a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries, formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building, in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share. I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, Sir, &c.

C. J. FOX.” — ED.

² From a copy in the possession of Mrs. L. Z. Leiter. A trans. exists in L. C. Passages in brackets are found only in L. C. trans. — ED.

from our little discontents. We are more thoroughly an enlightned people, with respect to our political interests, than perhaps any other under heaven. Every man among us reads, and is so easy in his circumstances as to have leisure for conversations of improvement, and for acquiring Information. Our domestic misunderstandings, when we have them, are of small extent, tho' monstrously magnified by your microscopic newspapers. He who judges from them, that we are falling into anarchy, or returning to the obedience of Britain, is like one who being shewn some spots in the Sun, shou'd fancy, that the whole Disk would soon be overspread by them, and that there wou'd be an end of Daylight. The great body of Intelligence among our people surrounds and overpowers our petty dissensions, as the Sun's great mass of fire diminishes and destroys his Spots. Do not therefore any longer delay the Evacuation of New York, in the vain hopes of a new revolution in your favour, if such a hope has indeed had any effect in causing that delay. [It is now nine months since the evacuations were promised.] You expect with reason, that the people of New York should do your Merchants justice in the payment of their old debts; Consider the injustice you do them in keeping them so long out of their habitations, and out of their business, by which they might have been enabled to make payment.

There is no truth more clear to me than this, that the great interest of our two Countries is a thorough reconciliation. Restraints on the freedom of Commerce and intercourse between us, can afford no advantage equivalent to the Mischief they will do by keeping up ill humour, and promoting a total alienation. Let you and I, my dear Friend, do our best towards securing and advancing that reconciliation. We

can do nothing, that in a dying hour will afford us more solid satisfaction.

[I wish you a prosperous journey, and a happy sight of your friends. Present my best respects to your good brother and sister, and] believe me ever, with sincere and great esteem, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1437. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Sept. 7, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of the 9th past. I am glad, that the little Books are pleasing to you and your Children, and that the Children improve by them. I send you herewith some more of them.

My grandson Bache has been four Years at School at Geneva, and is but lately come home to me here. I find Reason to be satisfied with the Improvement he has made in his Learning. He translates common Latin readily into French, but his English has suffer'd for want of Use; tho' I think he would readily recover it, if he were awhile at your School at Cheam, and at the same time be going on with his Latin and Greek. You were once so kind as to offer to take him under your Care; would that be still convenient to you? He is docile and of gentle Manners, ready to receive and follow good Advice, and will set no bad Example to your *other* Children. He gains every day upon my Affections.

I long much to see you and yours, and my other Friends

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D.—Ed.

in England, but I have not yet determined on the Journey. Our definitive Treaty of Peace being now sign'd, I have indeed less to confine me here, and might make a short Excursion without much Inconvenience; but short Days and Winter are coming on, and I think I can hardly undertake such an Expedition before the Spring of next Year.

With regard to the future Establishment of your Children, which you say you want to consult me about, I am still of Opinion, that America will afford you more Chances of doing it well than England. All the means of good Education are plenty there, the general Manners are simple and pure, Temptations to Vice and Folly fewer, the Profits of Industry in Business as great and sure as in England; and there is one Advantage more, which your Command of Money will give you there, I mean the laying out a Part of your Fortune in new Land, now to be had extreamly cheap; but which must be increas'd immensely in Value, before your Children come of Age, by the rapid Population of the Country. If you should arrive there while I live, you know you may depend on every Assistance in my Power to afford you, and I think my Children will have a Pleasure too in serving their Father's Friend. I do not offer it as a Motive, that you will be much esteem'd and respected there; for that you are, and must be, everywhere; but give me leave to flatter myself, that my being made happier in my last Years by your Neighbourhood and Society may be some Inducement to you.

I forwarded your Letter to Mr. Williams. Temple is always with me, being my Secretary. He presents his Respects to you. I have been lately ill with a Fit of the Gout, if that may indeed be called a Disease. I rather suspect it to be a Remedy, since I always find my Health and Vigour of

Mind improv'd after the Fit is over. I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. You say you are a little afraid that our Country is spoiled. Parts of it have indeed suffered by the War, those situated near the Sea: but the body of the Country has not been much hurt, and the Fertility of our Soil, with the Industry of our People, now that the Commerce of all the World is open to us, will soon repair the Damages receiv'd, and introduce that Prosperity, which we hope Providence intends for us, since it has so remarkably favour'd our Revolution.

1438. TO JOHN JAY¹

Passy, September 10, 1783.

SIR,

I have received a letter from a very respectable person in America, containing the following words, viz.

"It is confidently reported, propagated, and believed by some among us, that the Court of France was at the bottom against our obtaining the fishery and territory in that great extent, in which both are secured to us by the treaty; that our minister at that court favoured, or did not oppose, this design against us; and that it was entirely owing to the firmness, sagacity, and disinterestedness of Mr. Adams, with whom Mr. Jay united, that we have obtained these important advantages." ²

¹ Printed in "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 482; and in "Life of John Jay" (W^m Jay), Vol. II, p. 125. — ED.

² This extract is from a letter written by Dr. Cooper of Boston, and dated May 5th, 1783. In a preceding paragraph, Dr. Cooper says: "There is a party

It is not my purpose to dispute any share of the honour of that treaty, which the friends of my colleagues may be disposed to give them; but, having now spent fifty years of my life in public offices and trusts, and having still one ambition left, that of carrying the character of fidelity at least to the grave with me, I cannot allow that I was behind any of them in zeal and faithfulness. I therefore think, that I ought not to suffer an accusation, which falls little short of treason to my country, to pass without notice, when the means of effectual

among us disposed to avail themselves of every incident, and of all personal resentments, to weaken and divide our public counsels, and injure the alliance. Regard to the general good, as well as private and the most constant friendship, oblige me to state things as they are." Then comes the extract in the text. Dr. Cooper adds: "It has also been said, from the same quarter, that the court of France secretly traversed Mr. Adams's views in Holland for obtaining from the United Provinces an acknowledgment of our independence; and that the same part has been acted in Spain and Russia. All these things are incredible to me; and, though they make some impression at present, truth is great and will prevail. Care, I hope, will be taken both at Congress and in Europe, as far as public prudence will permit, to state, as soon as may be, these matters in a just light, and to prevent the public mischiefs, as well as private injuries, that may arise from misapprehensions in matters of this moment."

A copy of the whole of this letter was sent by Dr. Franklin to Count de Vergennes, and it is now contained among the American papers in the *Archives des Affaires Etrangères* at Paris. Dr. Franklin likewise sent to Congress a copy of his correspondence with Messrs. Jay and Adams on this subject. M. de la Luzerne, in writing to Count de Vergennes some months afterwards, said: "Dr. Franklin has at last aroused himself from the apathy with which till now he seems to have regarded the attacks of his colleagues. He has sent to Congress the copy of the letter, which he had written to Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, requesting these two ministers to explain themselves respecting a report, which had gone abroad, that he did not unite in procuring for the United States admission to the fisheries, and that he was disposed to conclude a treaty of peace without securing this advantage to the eastern States. Mr. Jay, in his letter to Dr. Franklin, renders full justice to him on this point, and affirms in a positive manner, that he concurred with a zeal equal to his intelligence and experience in all the articles of the peace." — S.

vindication are at hand. You, Sir, were a witness of my conduct in that affair. To you and my other colleagues I appeal, by sending to each a similar letter with this, and I have no doubt of your readiness to do a brother Commissioner justice, by certificates that will entirely destroy the effect of that accusation. I have the honour to be, with much esteem, &c.¹

B. FRANKLIN.

1439. TO JOSIAH QUINCY² (P. C.)

Passy, September 11, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Storer told me, not long since, that you complained of my not writing to you. You had reason, for I find among your Letters to me two unanswered, viz, those of May 25, and Dec. 17. 1781. The truth is, I have had too much Business to do for the publick, and too little Help allowed me; so that it became impossible for me to keep up my private Correspondences. I promised myself more Leisure when the Definitive Treaty of Peace should be concluded. But that it seems is to be followed by a Treaty of Commerce, which will probably take up a good deal of Time, and require much Attention. I seize this little Interim to sit down and have a little Chat with my Friends in America.

I lament with you the many Mischiefs, the injustices, the Corruption of Manners, &c., &c., that attended a depreciating Currency. It is some Consolation to me, that I wash'd my

¹ A copy of this letter was sent to Mr. Adams. Replies were received from Mr. Adams, September 13, 1783, and Mr. Jay, September 11, 1783, the substance of which will be found in Volume X of this edition. — ED.

² From the original in the possession of Josiah P. Quincy, Esq. — ED.

Hands of that Evil by predicting it in Congress, and proposing Means, that would have been effectual to prevent it if they had been adopted. Subsequent Operations that I have executed, demonstrate that my Plan was practicable. But it was unfortunately rejected. Considering all our Mistakes and Mismanagements, it is wonderful we have finished our Affair so well, and so soon. Indeed, I am wrong in using that Expression, *We have finish'd our Affairs so well*. Our Blunders have been many, and they serve to manifest the Hand of Providence more clearly in our Favour; so that we may much more properly say, *These are thy Doings, O Lord, and they are marvellous in our Eyes*.

Mr. Storer, whom you recommended to me is now in England. He needed none of the Advice you desired me to give him. His Behaviour here was unexceptionable, and he gained the Esteem of all that knew him.

The epitaph on my dear and much esteemed young Friend,¹ is too well written to be capable of Improvement by any Corrections of mine. Your Moderation appears in it, since the natural affection of a Parent has not induced you to exaggerate his Virtues. I shall always mourn his Loss with you; a Loss not easily made up to his Country.

How differently constituted was his noble and generous Mind from that of the miserable Calumniators you mention! Having Plenty of Merit in himself, he was not jealous of the Appearance of Merit in others, but did Justice to their Characters with as much Pleasure as these People do Injury. It is now near two Years since your Friendship induced you to acquaint me with some of their Accusations. I guess'd easily at the Quarter from whence they came; but, conscious of my

¹ Josiah Quincy, Junior. — ED.

Innocence, and unwilling to disturb public Operations by private Resentments or Contentions, I pass'd them over in Silence; and have not, till within these few days, taken the least Step towards my Vindication. Inform'd that the Practice of abusing me continues, and that some heavy Charges are lately made against me respecting my Conduct in the Treaty, written from Paris and propagated among you, I have demanded of all my Colleagues that they do me Justice, and I have no doubt of receiving it from each of them. I did not think it necessary to justify myself to you, by answering the Calumnies you mentioned. I knew you did not believe them. It was improbable, that I should at this Distance combine with anybody to urge the Redemption of the Paper on those unjust Terms, having no Interest in such Redemption. It was impossible, that I should have traded with the Public Money, since I had not traded with any Money, either separately or jointly with any other Person, directly or indirectly, to the Value of a Shilling since my being in France. And the Fishery, which it was said I had relinquished, had not then come in question, nor had I ever dropt a Syllable to that purpose in word or writing; but was always firm in this Principle, that, having had a common Right with the English to the Fisheries while connected with that Nation, and having contributed equally with our Blood and Treasure in conquering what had been gained from the French, we had an undoubted Right on breaking up our Partnership, to a fair Division. As to the two Charges of Age and Weakness, I must confess the first, but I am not quite so clear in the latter; and perhaps my Adversaries may find that they presum'd a little too much upon it, when they ventur'd to attack me.

But enough of these petty Personalities. I quit them to

rejoice with you, in the PEACE God has blest us with, and in the Prosperity it gives us a prospect of. The Definitive Treaty was signed the third instant. We are now Friends with England and with all Mankind. May we never see another War! for in my opinion *there never was a good War, or a bad Peace*. Adieu, believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1440. TO ELIAS BOUDINOT (L. C.)

Passy, Sept 13, 1783.

SIR,

I received, a few Days since, the private Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me of the 8th of June. I regret with you the Resignation of the late Secretary. Your present Cares are increas'd by it, and it will be difficult to find a Successor of equal Abilities.

We found no difficulty in decyphering the Resolution of Congress. The Commissioners have taken no Notice of it in our public Letter.

I am happy that both the Device and Workmanship of the Medal are approved with you, as they have the good Fortune to be by the best Judges on this Side the Water. It has been esteemed a well-tim'd, as well as a well-merited Compliment here, and has had good Effects. Since the two first which you mention as receiv'd, I have sent by different Opportunities so many, as that every Member of Congress might have one. I hope they are come safe to hand before this time. I wrote a long Letter to Mr. Livingston by Mr. Barney, to which I beg leave to refer, inclosing a Copy.

We had, before signing the Definitive Treaty, receiv'd the Ratification of the preliminary Articles by his Britannic Majesty, exchange'd with us by Mr. Hartley for that of the Congress. I send herewith a Copy of the first and last Clauses.

In a former Letter, I mentioned the volunteer Proceedings of a Merchant at Alicant, towards obtaining a Treaty between us and the Emperor of Morocco. We have since receiv'd a Letter from a Person ¹ who says, as you will see by the Copy enclos'd, that he is sent by the Emperor to be the Bearer of his Answer to the United States, and that he is arriv'd in Spain on his way to Paris. He has not yet appear'd here, and we hardly know what Answer to give him. I hope the sending a Minister to that Court, as recommended in my last, has been taken into Consideration, or at least that some Instructions respecting that Nation have been sent to your Minister in Spain, who is better situated than we are for such a Negotiation.

The Minister from Denmark often speaks to me about the propos'd Treaty, of which a Copy went by Barney. No Commission to sign it, nor any Instructions from Congress relating to it, are yet arriv'd; and, tho' press'd, I have not ventur'd to do any thing further in the Affair.

I forward herewith a Letter to the Congress from the City of Hamburgh.² I understand that a good Disposition towards us prevails there, which it may be well to encourage.

No answer has yet been given me from the Court of Portugal, respecting the Plan of a Treaty concerted between its Ambassador here and me. He has been unwell and much in the Country, so that I have not seen him lately. I suspect

¹ Giacomo Crocco. — ED.

² See "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. IV, p. 88. — ED.

that the false or exaggerated Reports of the distracted Situation of our Government, industriously propagated thro'out Europe by our Enemies, have made an Impression in that Kingdom to our Disadvantage, and inclin'd them to hesitate in forming a connection with us. Questions asked me, and Observations made by several of the foreign Ministers here, convince me, that the idle Stories of our Disunion, Contempt of Authority, Refusal to pay Taxes, &c.; have been too much credited, and been very injurious to our Reputation.

I sent before a Copy of the Letter I wrote to the Grand Master of Malta,¹ with a present of our Medal. With this you will have a Copy of his Answer. I send also a Copy of a Note I received from the Pope's Nuncio.² He is very civil on all Occasions, and has mention'd the Possibility of an advantageous Trade America might have with the Ecclesiastical State, which he says has two good Ports, Civita Vecchia, and _____.³

This Court continues favourable to us. Count de Vergennes was resolute in refusing to sign the Definitive Treaty with England before ours was signed. The English Ministers were offended, but comply'd. I am convinc'd that Court will never cease endeavouring to disunite us. We shall, I hope, be constantly on our Guard against those Machinations; for our Safety consists in a steady adherence to our Friends, and our Reputation in a faithful Regard to Treaties, and in a grateful Conduct towards our Benefactors.

I send herewith sundry Memorials recommended to my

¹ See letter dated April 6, 1783. — ED.

² For the reply of the Pope's Nuncio, July 28, 1783 (D. S. W.), see "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Wharton), Vol. VI, p. 614. — ED.

³ Name not given in draft. — ED.

Care by M. le Comte de Vergennes, viz. one respecting a Claim of Messi'srs Fosters, of Bordeaux, one of M. Pecquet, and one of M. Bayard. The Congress will take such Notice of them as they shall think proper. With great Esteem and Respect, I have the Honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1441. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, Near Paris, Sept. 16, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Having this Opportunity by Mr. Bingham,¹ who has the Honour of being known to you, I seize it to thank you for your excellent Book, and other Favours, and to let you know that I continue well, except a little Gout, which perhaps is no more a disease than a Remedy. Mr. Petrie inform'd me of your being also well with Mrs. Price lately at Brighthelmstone, which gave me great Pleasure: Please to present my affectionate Respects to that good Lady.

All the Conversation here at present turns upon the Balloons fill'd with light inflammable Air, and the means of managing them, so to give men the Advantage of Flying. One is to be let off on Friday next at Versailles, which it is said will be able to carry up 1000 pounds' weight — I know not whether inclusive or exclusive of its own.

I have sent an Account of the former to Sir Joseph Banks, our President, and shall be glad to hear if the Experiment is repeated with Success in England. Please to forward him the enclos'd Print.

¹ U. S. Commercial agent at Martinique. — Ed.

Inflammable Air puts me in mind of a little jocular Paper I wrote some years since in ridicule of a prize Question given out by a certain Academy on this side the Water, and I enclose it for your Amusement. On second Thoughts, as it is a mathematical Question, and perhaps I think it more trifling than it really is, and you are a Mathematician, I am afraid I have judg'd wrong in sending it to you. Our Friend, Dr. Priestly, however, who is *apt* to give himself *Airs*, and has a kind of Right to every thing his Friends *produce* upon that Subject, may perhaps like to see it, and you can send it to him without reading it.¹

We have at length sign'd our preliminary Articles as definitive. All the Additions we have been so long discussing, being referr'd to a future Treaty of Commerce. I have now a little Leisure, and long to see and be merry with the Club, but I doubt I cannot undertake the Journey before Spring. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

They make small Balloons now of the same material with what is called Gold-beater's Leaf. Inclos'd I send one, which being fill'd with inflammable Air by my Grandson, went up last Night, to the Cieling in my Chamber, and remained rolling about there for some time. Please give it also to Sir Joseph Banks. If a Man should go up with one of the large ones, might there not be some mechanical Contrivance to compress the Globe at pleasure; and thereby incline it to descend, and let it expand when he inclines to rise again?

¹ In reference to Franklin's bagatelle upon "Perfumes." Dr. Price replied: "Mr. Dagge bro't me your paper on a mathematical prize question, proposed by the Royal Academy of B[russels]. I convey'd this to Dr. Priestley, and we have been entertained with the pleasantry of it, and the ridicule it contains." — ED.

1442. TO ELIAS BOUDINOT (D. S. W.)

Passy, September 27, 1783.

SIR,

Mr. Thaxter, late Secretary of Mr. Adams, who is charged with all our Dispatches, that were intended to go by the French packet Boat, writes from L'Orient, that tho' he arrived there two days before the time appointed for her Sailing, he missed reaching her by four hours; but another light Vessel was fitting, and would sail the 21st Instant, in which he hoped to arrive at New York nearly as soon as the Packet. We shall send Duplicates by the next from hence.

In the mean time I inclose a printed Copy of the definitive Treaty, which I hear is ratified. Indeed we have the Ratification of the Preliminaries.

Mr. Hartley, when he left us, expected to return in three weeks, in order to proceed with us in forming a Treaty of Commerce. The new Commission that was intended for us is not yet come to hand. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1443. FROM MAXIMILIEN-MARIE-ISIDORE
ROBESPIERRE TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN¹

(U. OF P.)

MONSIEUR

Une sentence de proscription rendue par les échevins de St. Omer contre les conducteurs électriques m'a présenté l'occasion de plaider au conseil d'Artois la cause d'une découverte sublime, dont le genre humain vous est redevable. Le désir de contribuer à déraciner les préjugés qui s'opposoient à ses progrès dans notre province m'a porté à faire imprimer le plaidoyer que

¹ See *supra*, Vol. I, p. 105. — ED.

j'ai prononcé dans cette affaire. J'ose espérer, Monsieur, que vous daignerez recevoir avec bonté un exemplaire de cet ouvrage, dont l'objet étoit d'engager mes concitoyens à accepter un de vos bienfaits; heureux d'avoir pu être utile à mon pays, en déterminant ses premiers magistrats à accueillir cette importante découverte; plus heureux encore si je puis joindre à cet avantage l'honneur d'obtenir le suffrage d'un homme dont le moindre mérite est d'être le plus illustre sçavant de l'univers.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec respect
Monsieur

A Arras le 1 8bre 1783

Votre très humble
et très obéissant serviteur
de Robespierre, avocat
au conseil d'Artois.

1444. TO SIR EDWARD NEWENHAM¹

Passy, Oct. 2, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your very kind letter of the 16th past. I rejoice sincerely to hear of your safe return to your own country, family, and friends, and of the success of your election.

It is a pleasing reflection, arising from the contemplation of our successful struggle, and the manly, spirited, and unanimous resolves at Dungannon, that liberty, which some years since appeared in danger of extinction, is now regaining the ground she had lost, that arbitrary governments are likely to become more mild and reasonable, and to expire by degrees, giving place to more equitable forms; one of the effects this of the art of printing, which diffuses so general a light, augmenting with the growing day, and of so penetrating a nature, that all the window-shutters despotism and priestcraft can oppose to keep it out, prove insufficient.

In answer to your question respecting what may be neces-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," Vol. I, p. 454. — ED.

sary to fix a trade between Ireland and America, I may acquaint you between ourselves, that there is some truth in the report you may have heard, of our desiring to know of Mr. Hartley whether he was empowered or instructed to include Ireland in the treaty of commerce proposed to us, and of his sending for instructions on that head, which never arrived. That treaty is yet open, may possibly be soon resumed; and it seems proper, that something should be contained in it to prevent the doubts and misunderstandings that may hereafter arise on the subject, and secure to Ireland the same advantages in trade that England may obtain. You can best judge whether some law or resolution of your Parliament may not be of use towards gaining that point.

My grandson joins me in wishes of every kind of felicity for you, Lady Newenham, and all your amiable family. God bless you, and give success to your constant endeavours for the welfare of your country. With true and great respect and esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1445. TO THOMAS BRAND HOLLIS ¹

(L. C.)

Passy, near Paris, Octo^r 5, 1783.

SIR,

I received but lately (tho' sent in June) your most valuable present of the *Memoirs of Thomas Hollis, Esq^r*, who was truly, as you describe him in your letter, "a good Citizen of the World, and a faithful Friend of America." America,

¹ Thomas Brand, upon inheriting the property of Thomas Hollis, assumed the name of Hollis. The *Memoirs of Thomas Hollis* were published by Francis Blackburne (1780). — ED.

too, is extremely sensible of his Benevolence and great Beneficence towards her, and will ever revere his Memory. These Volumes are a Proof of what I have sometimes had occasion to say, in encouraging People to undertake difficult Public Services, that it is prodigious the quantity of Good that may be done by one Man, *if he will make a Business of it*. It is equally surprizing to think of the very little that is done by many; for, such is the general Frivolity of the Employments and Amusements of the rank we call *Gentlemen*, that every Century may have seen three successions of a set of a thousand each, in every kingdom of Europe, (Gentlemen too, of equal or superior Fortune,) no one of which sets, in the course of their lives, has done the good effected by this Man alone! Good, not only to his own nation, and to his cotemporaries, but to distant Countries, and to late Posterity; for such must be the effect of his multiplying and distributing Copies of the Works of our best English Writers, on Subjects the most important to the Welfare of Society.

I knew him personally but little. I sometimes met with him at the Royal Society and the Society of Arts; but he appeared shy of my acquaintance, tho he often sent me valuable Presents, such as Hamilton's Works,¹ Sidney's Works, &c., which are now among the most precious ornaments of my Library. We might possibly, if we had been more intimate, have concerted some useful operations together; but he loved to do his good alone and secretly; and I find besides, in perusing these Memoirs, that I was a doubtful Character with him.

¹ There is here probably a fault of memory in regard to the name of the author; or perhaps an error of the press. The work alluded to, may have been "Toland's Life of Milton," an elegant edition of which was published by Thomas Hollis, — S.

I do not respect him less for his Error; and I am obliged to the Editors for the Justice they have done me. They have made a little mistake in page 400, where a Letter, which appeared in a London Paper, January 7th, 1768, is said to have been written by Mr. Adams. It was written by me, and is reprinted in Mr. Vaughan's Collection of my Political Pieces, p. 231. This Eratum is of no great importance, but may be corrected in a future Edition.

I see Mr. Hollis had a Collection of curious Medals. If he had been still living, I should certainly have sent him one of the Medals that I have caused to be struck here. I think the countenance of my *Liberty* would have pleased him. I suppose you possess the Collection, and have the same taste. I beg you therefore to accept of one of these Medals as a mark of my Respect, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1446. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS (U. OF P.)

Passy, Oct. 8, 1783

SIR,

The Publick were promis'd a printed particular Account of the Rise & Progress of the Balloon Invention, to be publish'd about the End of last Month. I waited for it, to send it to you expecting it would be more satisfactory than any thing I could write; but it does not yet appear. We have only at present the enclos'd Pamphlet which does not answer the Expectation given us. I send you with it some Prints. That of the Balloon lately rais'd at Versailles is said to be an exact Representation. I was not present, but am told it was fill'd in about ten minutes by means of burning Straw. Some say

Water was thrown into the Flame, others that it was Spirits of Sal Volatile. It was suppos'd to have risen about 200 Toises: But did not continue long at that height, was carried horizontally by the Wind and descended gently as the Air within grew cooler. So vast a Bulk when it began to rise so majestically in the Air, struck the Spectators with Surprise and Admiration. The Basket contain'd a Sheep, a Duck & a Cock, who except the Cock receiv'd no Hurt by the Fall.

The Duke de Crillon made a Feast last Week in the Bois de Boulogne just by my Habitation, on Occasion of the Birth of two Spanish Princes. After the Fireworks, we had a Balloon of about 5 feet Diameter, fill'd with permanent inflammable Air. It was dismiss'd about One o'Clock in the Morning. It carried under it a large Lanthorn with Inscriptions on its Sides. The Night was quite calm and clear, so that it went right up. The Appearance of the Light diminish'd gradually till it appear'd no bigger than one of the Stars, and in about 20 minutes I lost sight of it entirely. It fell the next Day on the other side of the same Wood near the Village Boulogne, about half after 12, having been suspended in the Air 11 hours and a half. It lodg'd in a Tree, and was torn in getting it down; so that it cannot be ascertain'd whether it burst when above or not, tho' that is suppos'd. Smaller Repetitions of the Experiment are making every day in all Quarters. Some of the larger Balloons that have been up, are preparing to be sent up again, in a few Days; but I do not hear of any material Improvements yet made either in the mechanical or chemical Parts of the Operation. Most is expected from the new one undertaken upon Subscription by Messieurs Charles & Robert, who are Men of Science and mechanical Dexterity. It is to carry up a Man. I send

you enclos'd the Proposals, which it is said are already subscribed to by a considerable Number, and likely to be carried into Execution. If I am well at the Time, I purpose to be present, being a Subscriber myself, and shall send you an exact Account of Particulars.

With great Esteem and Respect for yourself and the Society; I have the honour to be,

Sir,

1447. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹ (P. C.)

Passy Oct 16, 1783

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs, but I cannot let Mr. Adams who will see you go without a line, to inquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, & to assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

I think with you, that your Quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition, if I sh'd make it, of a family compact between England, France, and America? America w^d be as happy as the Sabine Girls, if she c^d be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are these repeated wars! You do not want to conquer & govern one another. Why then sh'd you continually be employed in injuring & destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what Bridges, roads, canals, and other usefull public works & institutions,

¹ From the private collection of Mrs. L. Z. Leiter. — ED.

tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief! You are near neighbours, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is *The Most Christian King*, and the other *Defender of the Faith*. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another." "Seek peace, and ensue it." Adieu.

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1448. TO EDWARD NAIRNE

Passy, October 18, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favour of August 14th,¹ by Mr. Sykes, with the book of directions for using your patent electric machine. The machine itself is also come to hand in good order, after some delay on the road; and I think it very ingeniously contrived indeed; I wish your success in the sale may be equal to its merits. The experiments in your pamphlet gave me pleasure, and I shall be glad to see the account you mention of the shortening of wires by lightning.

What you have heard of the eyes of sheep forced out by a stroke of lightning which killed them, puts me in mind of having formerly seen at Philadelphia six horses all killed by lightning in a stable, every one of whom appeared to have bled at

¹ This letter is in A. P. S. — ED.

the eyes, nose, and mouth; though I do not recollect that any of their eyes were out.¹

You are so good as to consider how much my time has been taken up, and to excuse on that account my being a bad correspondent. Near three years ago I began a letter to you on the subject of hygrometers. I had written three folio pages of it, when I was interrupted by some business; and, before I had time to finish it, I had mislaid it. I have now found it, and, having added what I suppose I had intended to add, I enclose it. You can judge better than myself, whether my idea of such an instrument is practicable and may be useful.

If you favour me with another line, let me know how Mrs. Nairne does, and your amiable children. With great esteem,
&c. B. FRANKLIN.

1449. TO DAVID HARTLEY²

Passy, Oct. 22, 1783.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath with your proposed temporary convention, which you desire me to show to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and con-

¹ "I have lately met with a circumstance of the effects of Lightning which I never heard of before. My authority is part of a letter from the Duke of Marlborough to Professor Hornby of Oxford, who is now at Ramsgate for his Health, where he read it to me. A Gentleman told the Duke that in the Storm of Lightning which happened lately in Oxfordshire he had several of his Sheep killed under a Tree. I think it was thirteen, & that when they came to examine them, they found that everyone of them had the Balls of their Eyes forced out." (Nairne).—ED.

² From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," Vol. II, p. 408.—ED.

verse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention, that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, &c., has not, I think, any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own *china vase*.¹ I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters, said to come from there with such accounts, are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned, against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will have arrived.

I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery advances, and that your brother is well. Please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1450. TO ELIAS BOUDINOT (L. C.)

Passy, Nov. 1, 1783.

SIR,

Inclosed is a copy of my last, which went by the English Packet. I heard after I wrote it, that, the French Packet putting back by contrary winds, Mr. Thaxter had an opportunity of getting on board her, and that she sailed the 26th of September.

The mentioned new Commission is not yet come to hand. Mr. Hartley is not returned, and I hear will stay for the meeting of Parliament, which is to be the 11th instant, and not come hither till the Recess of the Christmas Holidays. Mr. Jay went to England about three weeks since on some per-

¹ A reference to Franklin's familiar comparison of the British Empire to a China vase: 'twere a great pity to break it. — ED.

sonal affairs; and Mr. Adams followed last week to see that Country, and take some Exercise during the vacancy of Business.

This Court is now at Fontainebleau, but will return to Versailles in a few days. Its good Disposition towards us continues. The late failure of payment in the Caisse d'Escompte, an institution similar to the Bank of England, occasioned partly by its having gone too far in assisting the government with Money, and the Inability of the Government to support their Credit, tho extremely desirous of doing it, is a fresh Proof that our not obtaining a farther Loan was not occasioned by want of Good will to assist us, as some have unjustly supposed, but by a real want of the Means. Money is at present unaccountably scarce here; what is arrived and expected in Spain since the Peace, it is thought, will set things to rights. The Govern^t has proposed a second Lottery for this year, by which they borrow 24 Millions, and it filled readily. This helps, and the Caisse d'Escompte goes on again with its operations; but it is said the Interest paid by the Lottery Plan is nearly 7 per cent.

I have received the Duplicates of your Excellency's Letter of the 15th July, to the Commissioners, which is very satisfactory, tho' it came to hand but lately. The first, sent *viâ* New York, has not yet appeared. I have sent Copies of it to the Hague and Madrid. The substance is published in several Papers.

I have acquainted the Minister of Sweden, that I have received the Ratification of the Treaty; and he has written to me, that he shall be in town in a few days, when he will make the Exchange. The conclusion of the Danish Treaty waits only for the Commission and Instructions from

Congress. The Ambassador of Portugal informed me lately, that his Court had our proposed Plan under Consideration, and that we should soon hear from them. I sent it to Congress by Barney, and hear the Ship is arrived. A Commission and Instructions will be wanting for that also, should the Congress be disposed to conclude a Treaty with that Nation.

I see by the Public Prints that the Congress have ratified the Contract I made with the Minister here, respecting the Loans and Aids we had received; but the Ratification itself, tho' directed to be sent me, has never come to hand, and I am often asked for it. I beg it may be forwarded by the first opportunity.

There has been with me lately M. Pierre du Calvet, a Merchant of Montreal, who, when our army was in Canada, furnished our Generals and Officers with many things they wanted, taking their Receipts and Promisory notes for payment; and, when the English repossessed the Country, he was imprisoned, and his Estate seized, on account of the services he had rendered us. He has shown me the Originals of his Papers, which I think are genuine. He produced also a quantity of Congress Paper, which he says he received in payment for some of the Supplies, and which appeared to me of our first Emissions, and yet all fresh and clean, as having passed thro' no other hands. When he was discharged from Prison, he could not obtain permission to go into the United States to claim the Debt, but was allowed to go to England; and from thence he came hither to solicit payment from me. Having no authority to meddle with such Debts, and the sum being considerable, I refused, and advised him to take Passage for America, and make his application to Congress. He said he was grown old, much broken and weakned by near

three years' Imprisonment, and that the voyage from Canada to London had like to have been too much for him, he being sick all the Way; so that he could not think of another, tho' Distressed for want of his Money. He appears an honest Man, and his case a hard one. I have therefore undertaken to forward his Papers, and I beg leave to recommend them to the speedy Consideration of Congress, to whom I request you would be pleased to present my dutiful respects, and assure them of my most faithful Services. With great Esteem and Regard, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1451. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS (U. of P.)

Passy, Nov. 21, 1783—

DEAR SIR,

I received your friendly Letter of the 7th Inst. I am glad my Letters respecting the Aerostatic Experiment were not unacceptable. But as more perfect Accounts of the Construction and Management of that Machine have been and will be publish'd before your Transactions, and from which Extracts may be made that will be more particular & therefore more satisfactory, I think it best not to print those Letters. I say this in answer to your Question for I did not indeed write them with a view of their being inserted. M. Faujas de St. Fond acquainted me yesterday, that a Book on the Subject which has been long expected, will be publish'd in a few Days, and I shall send you one of them. Enclos'd is a Copy of the *Proces verbal* taken of the Experiment made yesterday in the Garden of the Queen's Palace la Muette where the Dauphin now resides, which being near my House I was present. This

Paper was drawn up hastily, & may in some Places appear to you obscure; therefore I shall add a few explanatory Observations.

This Balloon was larger than that which went up from Versailles, and carried the Sheep, &c. Its Bottom was open, and in the middle of the Opening was fix'd a kind of Basket Grate in which Faggots and Sheaves of Straw were burnt. The Air rarified in passing thro' this Flame rose in the Balloon, swell'd out its Sides & fill'd it.

The Persons who were plac'd in the Gallery made of Wicker, and attach'd to the Outside near the Bottom, had each of them a Post thro' which they could pass Sheaves of Straw into the Grate to keep up the Flame, & thereby keep the Balloon full. When it went over our Heads, we could see the Fire which was very considerable. As the Flame slackens, the rarified Air cools and condenses, the Bulk of the Balloon diminishes and it begins to descend. If these in the Gallery see it likely to descend in an improper Place they can, by throwing on more Straw, & renewing the Flame, make it rise again, and the Wind carries it farther.

La Machine poussée par le Vent s'est dirigée sur une des Allées du Jardin. That is, against the Trees of one of the Walks. The Gallery hitch'd among the top Boughs of those Trees which had been cut and were stiff, while the Body of the Balloon lean'd beyond & seem'd likely to overset. I was then in great Pain for the Men, thinking them in danger of being thrown out, or burnt; for I expected that the Balloon being no longer upright, the Flame would have laid hold of the Inside that lean'd over it. But by means of some Cords that were still attach'd to it, it was soon brought upright again, made to descend, & carried back to its place. It was however much damag'd.

Planant sur l'Horizon. When they were as high as they chose to be, they made less Flame, and suffer'd the Machine to drive horizontally with the Wind, of which however they felt very little, as they went with it, and as fast. They say they had a charming View of Paris & its Environs, the Course of the River, &c. but that they were once lost, not knowing what Part they were over, till they saw the Dome of the Invalids, which rectified their Ideas. Probably while they were employ'd in keeping up the Fire, the Machine might turn, and by that means they were *desorienté* as the French call it.

There was a vast Concourse of Gentry in the Garden, who had great Pleasure in seeing the Adventures go off so chearfully, & applauded them by clapping, &c. but there was at the same time a good deal of Anxiety for their Safety. Multitudes in Paris saw the Balloon passing; but did not know there were Men with it, it being then so high that they could not see them.

Devélopant du Gaz. That is, in plain English, *burning more Straw*; for tho' there is a little Mystery made, concerning the kind of Air with which the Balloon is fill'd I conceive it to be nothing more than hot Smoke or common Air rariy'd, — tho' in this I may be mistaken; —

Ayant encore dans leur Galerie le deux tiers de leur approvisionnement. That is, their Provision of Straw; of which they carried up a great Quantity. It was well that in the hurry of so hazardous an Experiment, the Flame did not happen by any accidental Mismanagement to lay hold of this Straw; tho' each had a Bucket of Water by him, by way of Precaution.

One of these courageous Philosophers, the Marquis d'Ar-

landes, did me the Honour to call upon me in the Evening after the Experiment with Mr. Mongolfier the very ingenious Inventor. I was happy to see him safe. He inform'd me they lit gently without the least Shock, and the Balloon was very little damag'd.

[This method of filling the balloon with hot air is cheap and expeditious, and it is supposed may be sufficient for certain purposes, such as elevating an engineer to take a view of an enemy's army, works, etc., conveying intelligence into or out of a besieged town, giving signals to distant places, or the like.

[The other method of filling a balloon with permanently elastic inflammable air, and then closing it, is a tedious operation, and very expensive; yet we are to have one of that kind sent up in a few days. It is a globe of twenty-six feet diameter. The gores that compose it are red and white silk, so that it makes a beautiful appearance. A very handsome triumphal car will be suspended to it, in which Messrs. Robert, two brothers, very ingenious men, who have made it in concert with Mr. Charles, propose to go up. There is room in this car for a little table to be placed between them, on which they can write and keep their journal; that is, take notes of everything they observe, the state of their thermometer, barometer, hygrometer, etc., which they will have more leisure to do than the others, having no fire to take care of. They say they have a contrivance which will enable them to descend at pleasure. I know not what it is, but the expense of this machine, filling included, will exceed, it is said, ten thousand livres.

[This balloon of only twenty-six feet diameter, being filled with air ten times lighter than common air, will carry up a

greater weight than the other, which though vastly bigger, was filled with an air that could scarcely be more than twice as light. Thus the great bulk of one of these machines, with the short duration of its power, and the great expense of filling the other, will prevent the invention being of so much use as some may expect, till chemistry can invent a cheaper light air producible with more expedition.

[By the emulation between the two parties running high, the improvement in the construction and management of the balloons has already made a rapid progress, and one cannot say how far it may go. A few months since the idea of witches riding thro' the air upon a broomstick, and that of philosophers upon a bag of smoke, would have appeared equally impossible and ridiculous.

[These machines must always be subject to be driven by the winds. Perhaps mechanic art may find easy means to give them progressive motion in a calm, and to slant them a little in the wind.

[I am sorry this experiment is totally neglected in England, where mechanic genius is so strong. I wish I could see the same emulation between the two nations as I have seen the two parties here. Your philosophy seems to be too bashful. In this country we are not so much afraid of being laughed at. If we do a foolish thing, we are the first to laugh at it ourselves, and are almost as much pleased with a bonmot or a good chanson, that ridicules well the disappointment of a project, as we might have been with its success. It does not seem to me a good reason to decline prosecuting a new experiment which apparently increases the power of a man over matter, till we can see to what use that power may be applied. When we have learnt to manage it, we may hope some time or other

to find use for it, as men have done for magnetism and electricity, for which the first experiments were mere matters of amusement.

[This experiment is by no means a trifling one. It may be attended with important consequences that no one can foresee. We should not suffer pride to prevent our progress in science.

[Beings of a frank and [sic] nature far superior to ours have not disdained to amuse themselves with making and launching balloons, otherwise we should never have enjoyed the light of those glorious objects that rule our day and night, nor have had the pleasure of riding round the sun ourselves upon the balloon we now inhabit.

[With great and sincere esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Nov. 25th. — The procès verbal to which this letter relates went by last post. I have now got the within mentioned book, but it being too bulky to send by post, I shall try to get it forwarded to you by the Duke of Manchester's courier, who goes usually on Thursdays. I enclose one of the plates of it, which gives a perfect representation of the last great balloon. You can put it in its place when you receive the book.

B. F.]¹

¹ The paragraphs enclosed in brackets are not found in the draft in U. of P., but exist in a letter press copy now (March, 1906) owned by Dodd, Mead, & Co. — ED.

1452. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS¹ (P. C.)

Passy, December 1. 1783.

DEAR SIR: — In mine of yesterday I promised to give you an account of Messrs. Charles & Robert's experiment, which was to have been made this day, and at which I intended to be present. Being a little indisposed, and the air cool, and the ground damp, I declined going into the garden of the Tuileries, where the balloon was placed, not knowing how long I might be obliged to wait there before it was ready to depart, and chose to stay in my carriage near the statue of Louis XV., from whence I could well see it rise, and have an extensive view of the region of air through which, as the wind sat, it was likely to pass. The morning was foggy, but about one o'clock the air became tolerably clear, to the great satisfaction of the spectators, who were infinite, notice having been given of the intended experiment several days before in the papers, so that all Paris was out, either about the Tuileries, on the quays and bridges, in the fields, the streets, at the windows, or on the tops of houses, besides the inhabitants of all the towns and villages of the environs. Never before was a philosophical experiment so magnificently attended. Some guns were fired to give notice that the departure of the balloon was near, and a small one was discharged, which went to an amazing height, there being but little wind to make it deviate from its perpendicular course, and at length the sight of it was lost. Means were used, I am told, to prevent the great balloon's rising so high as might endanger its bursting. Several

¹ Letter press copy in possession of Dodd, Mead, & Co. — ED.

bags of sand were taken on board before the cord that held it down was cut, and the whole weight being then too much to be lifted, such a quantity was discharged as to permit its rising slowly. Thus it would sooner arrive at that region where it would be in equilibrio with the surrounding air, and by discharging more sand afterwards, it might go higher if desired. Between one and two o'clock, all eyes were gratified with seeing it rise majestically from among the trees, and ascend gradually above the buildings, a most beautiful spectacle. When it was about two hundred feet high, the brave adventurers held out and waved a little white penant, on both sides their car, to salute the spectators, who returned loud claps of applause. The wind was very little, so that the object though moving to the northward, continued long in view; and it was a great while before the admiring people began to disperse. The persons embarked were Mr. Charles, professor of experimental philosophy, and a zealous promoter of that science; and one of the Messieurs Robert, the very ingenious constructors of the machine. When it arrived at its height, which I suppose might be three or four hundred toises, it appeared to have only horizontal motion. I had a pocket-glass, with which I followed it, till I lost sight first of the men, then of the car, and when I last saw the balloon, it appeared no bigger than a walnut. I write this at seven in the evening. What became of them is not yet known here. I hope they descended by daylight, so as to see and avoid falling among trees or on houses, and that the experiment was completed without any mischievous accident, which the novelty of it and the want of experience might well occasion. I am the more anxious for the event, because I am not well informed of the means provided for letting themselves down,

and the loss of these very ingenious men would not only be a discouragement to the progress of the art, but be a sensible loss to science and society.

I shall enclose one of the tickets of admission, on which the globe was represented, as originally intended, but is altered by the pen to show its real state when it went off. When the tickets were engraved the car was to have been hung to the neck of the globe, as represented by a little drawing I have made in the corner.

I suppose it may have been an apprehension of danger in straining too much the balloon or tearing the silk, that induced the constructors to throw a net over it, fixed to a hoop which went round its middle, and to hang the car to that hoop.

Tuesday morning, December 2^d. — I am relieved from my anxiety by hearing that the adventurers descended well near L'Isle Adam before sunset. This place is near seven leagues from Paris. Had the wind blown fresh they might have gone much farther.

If I receive any further particulars of importance, I shall communicate them hereafter.

With great esteem, I am, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Tuesday evening. — Since writing the above I have received the printed paper and the manuscript containing some particulars of the experiment, which I enclose. I hear further that the travellers had perfect command of their carriage, descending as they pleased by letting some of the inflammable air escape, and rising again by discharging some sand; that they descended over a field so low as to talk with

the labourers in passing, and mounted again to pass a hill. The little balloon falling at Vincennes shows that mounting higher it met with a current of air in a contrary direction, an observation that may be of use to future aerial voyagers.

1453. TO HENRY LAURENS (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 6. 1783.

DEAR SIR: — I received your kind Letter of the 28th past, and I send you herewith the anonymous Brussels Letter, as you desire.¹ When I had last the Pleasure of seeing you at Passy, I forgot to mention to you that Mr. Ridley, soon after your Departure for the south of France, call'd upon me with a Request that I would let him see that Letter, and then that I would let him take it home with him, which I comply'd with, understanding it was to show it to Mr. Adams. Some Days after he acquainted me that the Handwriting was like that of M. de Neufville's Clerk, and propos'd to have it compared with some of Neufville's Letters in my Possession, which at his Desire I lent him. When he return'd them he remarked some Similarities, which I did not think very striking. What appeared most so to me at the time was the very long Stroke or Dash of the Pen across the Top of the small *t*, thus *t*, tho' I did not think that conclusive; and I have since observ'd it to be a more general Practice in Writing than I imagin'd. I indeed seldom make that Mark to my *t*'s, except when they are double; Yet I find when I do make it, it is nearly as long as in the Brussels Letter; and I see in your last that you do

¹ The letter from Charles de Weissenstein. — ED.

the same, the Dash sometimes passing over the whole word in which the *t* is placed. I saw neither Mr. Barclay nor Mr. Adams on that Occasion, but Mr. Ridley only. I suppose the Opinion you mention as pronounc'd, might be by them at Auteuil. I enclose the other anonymous, and the two Letters of Neufville, that you may compare them and judge for yourself.

We think of nothing here at present but of Flying; the Balloons engross all Conversation. Messrs. Charles and Robert made a Trip last Monday thro' the Air to a Place farther distant than Dover is from Calais; and could have gone much farther if there had been more Wind and Daylight. They have perfect Command of the Machine, descending and rising again at pleasure. The Progress made in the Management of it has been rapid, yet I fear it will hardly become a common Carriage in my time, tho' being the easiest of all Voitures it would be extreamly convenient to me, now that my Malady forbids the Use of the old ones over a Pavement.

The kind Enquiry made respecting me by the Person you mention does not surprize me. He is so unequal in his Temper, and so different from himself on different Occasions, that I should not wonder if he sometimes lov'd me.

The promis'd Commission is not yet come to my hands, nor have I any Advices from the Congress later than the 9th of September.

My Grandson joins me in affectionate Respects to you and Miss Laurens, and best Wishes for your Health and Prosperity. With great and sincere Esteem I am ever, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1454. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES

(P. A. E. E. U.)

(L. C.)

Passy, December 6, 1783.

SIR, Being now disabled by the Stone which in the easiest Carriage gives me Pain, wounds my Bladder, and occasions me to make bloody Urine, I find I can no longer pay my Devoirs personally at Versailles, which I hope will be excused. I have yet received from Congress no Answer to my Request of being recall'd. In the meantime I must beg your Excellency to receive my Respects by my Grandson, with such Matters as I may occasionally have to communicate, he being Secretary of the Legation. I am, with great and sincere Respect, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1455. TO WILLIAM HODGSON (A. P. S.)

DEAR SIR

Passy Dec. 10. 1783

Having represented to Congress the Services rendered to our Prisoners by the Rev^d M^r Wren, I have the Pleasure of transmitting their Thanks, together with a Diploma from the College at Princetown,¹ which I beg you would forward to him with my Respects. I shall not fail to recommend my Friend for the Consulship,² being with unalterable Esteem & Affection

Dear Sir,

Your most o. & m. h. S.

B. FRANKLIN.

Charge me with this Postage & that to Portsmouth

¹ See letter to Robert R. Livingston, July 22, 1783. — ED.

² See this recommendation in a letter to Thomas Mifflin, President of Congress, December 26, 1783. — ED.

1456. TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS (U. of P.)

Passy, Dec. 15. 1783

DEAR SIR,

You have probably had enough of my Correspondence on the Subject of the Balloons, yet I cannot forbear sending you M^r Charles's Account of his Voyage, which contains some Circumstances that are curious & Interesting. And perhaps you may for a Conclusion have one more Letter from me by him, if he makes the Flight said to be intended the first fair Wind from Paris to London.

With great Esteem, I am ever Dear Sir,

Your most obedient

Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1457. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, December 15, 1783

SIR:—I understand that the bishop or spiritual person who superintends or governs the Roman Catholic clergy in the United States of America resides in London, and is supposed to be under obligations to that court, and subject to be influenced by its ministers. This gives me some uneasiness, and I cannot but wish that one should be appointed to that office who is of this nation and who may reside there among our friends. I beg your Excellency to think a little of this matter, and to afford me your counsels upon it.¹ With the greatest respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ The vicar-apostolic of London at this time had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Roman Catholics of the United States. The fear of the influence

1458. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL ¹

Passy, December 15, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am much concerned to find by your letter to my grandson, that you are hurt by my long silence, and that you ascribe it to a supposed diminution of my friendship. Believe me, that is by no means the case; but I am too much harassed by a variety of correspondence, together with gout and gravel, which induce me to postpone doing what I often fully intend to do, and particularly writing, where the urgent necessity of business does not seem to require its being done immediately, my sitting too much at the desk having already almost killed me; besides, since Mr. Jay's residence here, I imagined he might keep you fully informed of what was material for you to know; and I beg you to be assured of my constant and sincere esteem and affection.

I do not know whether you have been informed, that a Mr. Montgomery, who lives at Alicant, took upon himself (for I think he had no authority) to make overtures last winter, in behalf of our States, towards a treaty with the Emperor of Morocco. In consequence of his proceedings I received a letter in August from a person, who acquainted me, that he was arrived in Spain by the Emperor's order, and was to come to Paris, there to receive and conduct to Morocco the minister

which the English spiritual head might exert over the Irish Catholics caused Franklin to write this letter to Count de Vergennes, and also to consult upon the same subject with M^{re}. de Cicé, archbishop of Bordeaux. Rev. John Carroll was appointed superior of the clergy of the United States in 1784.—ED.

¹ From "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 492.—ED.

of Congress appointed to make that treaty, intimating at the same time an expectation of money to defray his expenses. I communicated the letter to Mr. Jay. The conduct of Mr. Montgomery appeared to us very extraordinary and irregular; and the idea of a messenger from Morocco coming to Paris to meet and conduct a minister of Congress, appearing absurd and extravagant, as well as the demand of money by a person unknown, I made no answer to the letter; and I know not whether Mr. Jay made any to Mr. Montgomery, who wrote about the same time. But I have lately received another letter from the same person, a copy of which I enclose, together with my answer open for your perusal, and it is submitted to your discretion whether to forward it or not. The Mr. *Crocco*, who writes to me, having been, as he says, at Madrid, you possibly may know more of him than I can, and judge whether he is really a person in credit with the Emperor, and sent as he pretends to be, or not rather an *Escroc*, as the Fréñch call cheats and impostors.

I would not be wanting in any thing proper for me to do towards keeping that Prince in good humour with us, till the pleasure of Congress is known, and therefore would answer Mr. Crocco, if he be in his employ; but am loth to commit myself in correspondence with a *fripon*. It will be strange, if, being at Madrid, he did not address himself to you. With great and unalterable regard, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1459. TO GIACOMO FRANCESCO CROCCO¹

Paris, December 15, 1783.

SIR,

I have just received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 25th past. I did indeed receive your former letter of July, but, being totally a stranger to the mentioned proceedings of Mr. Montgomery,² and having no orders from Congress on the subject, I knew not how to give you any satisfactory answer, till I should receive further information; and I communicated your letter to Mr. Jay, minister of the United States for Spain, in whose district Mr. Montgomery is, and who is more at hand than I am for commencing that negotiation.

Mr. Jay, who is at present in England, has possibly written to you, though his letter may have miscarried, to acquaint you, that Mr. Montgomery had probably no authority from Congress to take the step he has done, and that it was not likely, that they, desiring to make a treaty with the Emperor, would think of putting his Majesty to the trouble of sending a person to Paris to receive and conduct their minister, since they have ships, and could easily land him at Cadiz, or present him at one of the Emperor's ports. We have, however, written to Congress, acquainting them with what we had been informed of the good and favourable disposition of his Imperial Majesty to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States; and we have no doubt but that, as

¹ From "Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Sparks), Vol. I, p. 373. — ED.

² Robert Montgomery of Alicant. — ED.

soon as their affairs are a little settled, which, by so severe a war carried on in the bowels of their country by one of the most powerful nations of Europe, have necessarily been much deranged, they will readily manifest equally good dispositions, and take all the proper steps to cultivate and secure the friendship of a monarch, whose character I know they have long esteemed and respected. I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1460. TO THOMAS MIFFLIN ¹ (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

SIR,

Not having heard of the Appointment of a new Secretary for foreign Affairs, I take the Liberty of addressing this Despatch directly to your Excellency. I received by Capt. Barney a Letter from the late President, directed to the Commissioners, dated November the 1, with a Set of Instructions, dated the 29th of October, a Resolution of the same Date respecting Hamburgh, and another of the 1st of November, relating to Capt. Paul Jones, all which will be duly regarded.

Capt. Jones, in passing thro' England, communicated these Papers to Mr. Adams, then at London. Mr. Adams, disappointed in not finding among them the Commission we had been made to expect, empowering us to make a Treaty of Commerce with England, wrote to me, that he imagin'd it might be contain'd in a Packet that was directed to me, and requested to be immediately informed; adding, that, in case no such Commission was come, he should depart directly for Holland; so I suppose he is now there. Mr. Laurens

¹ Elected President of Congress, November 3, 1783.—ED.

is gone to England, with an Intention of embarking soon for America. Mr. Jay is at Bath, but expected here daily. The English Ministers, the Duke of Manchester and Mr. Hartley, are both at present in Parliament. As soon as either of them return, we shall endeavour to obtain an additional Article to the Treaty, explaining that mentioned in the Instructions.

The Affairs of Ireland are still unsettled. The Parliament and Volunteers are at variance; the latter are uneasy, that, in the late Negotiations for a Treaty of Commerce between England and America, the British Ministers had made no mention of Ireland, and they seem to desire a separate Treaty of Commerce between America and that kingdom.

It was certainly disagreeable to the English Ministers, that all their Treaties for Peace were carried on under the Eye of the French Court. This began to appear towards the Conclusion, when Mr. Hartley refus'd going to Versailles, to sign there with the other Powers our definitive Treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humour comply'd with, but at an earlier Hour, that we might have time to acquaint le Comte de Vergennes before he was to sign with the Duke of Manchester.

The Dutch Definitive was not then ready, and the British Court now insists on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If, therefore, the Commission to us, which has been so long delay'd, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here or at London, as we may find most convenient.

The Treaty may be conducted, even there, in Concert and in the Confidence of Communication with the Ministers of our Friends, whose Advice may be of Use to us.

With respect to the British Court, we should, I think, be constantly upon our Guard, and impress strongly upon our Minds, that, tho' it has made Peace with us, it is not in truth reconcil'd either to us, or to its loss of us, but still flatters itself with Hopes, that some Change in the Affairs of Europe, or some Disunion among ourselves, may afford them an Opportunity of Recovering their Dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future Dependence. It is easy to see by the general Turn of the Ministerial Newspapers (light things, indeed, as Straws and Feathers, but like them they show which way the Wind blows), and by the malignant Improvement their Ministers make, in all the Foreign Courts, of every little Accident or Dissension among us, the Riot of a few Soldiers at Philadelphia, the Resolves of some Town Meetings, the Reluctance to pay Taxes, &c., all which are exaggerated, to represent our Government as so many Anarchies, of which the People themselves are weary, and the Congress as having lost its Influence, being no longer respected; I say it is easy to see from this Conduct, that they bear us no good Will, and that they wish the Reality of what they are pleas'd to imagine. They have, too, a numerous Royal Progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military Line. In these Circumstances we cannot be too careful to preserve the Friendships we have acquired abroad, and the Union we have established at home, to secure our Credit by a punctual Discharge of our Obligations of every kind, and our Reputation by the wisdom of our Councils: Since we know not how soon we may have a fresh Occasion for Friends, for Credit, and for Reputation.

The extravagant Misrepresentations of our Political State in foreign Countries, made it appear necessary to give them

better Information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done, than by publishing a Translation into French, now the most general Language in Europe, of the Book of Constitutions, which had been printed by Order of Congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two Copies, handsomely bound, to every foreign Minister here, one for himself, the other more elegant for his Sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded Matter of Surprise to many, who had conceived mean Ideas of the State of Civilization in America, and could not have expected so much political Knowledge and Sagacity had existed in our Wildernesses. And from all Parts I have the satisfaction to hear, that our Constitutions in general are much admired. I am persuaded, that this Step will not only tend to promote the Emigration to our Country of substantial People from all Parts of Europe, by the numerous Copies I shall disperse, but will facilitate our future Treaties with foreign Courts, who could not before know what kind of Government and People they had to treat with. As, in doing this, I have endeavoured to further the apparent Views of Congress in the first Publication, I hope it may be approved, and the Expence allowed. I send herewith one of the Copies.

Our Treaties with Denmark and Portugal remain unfinished, for want of Instructions respecting them from Congress, and a Commission empowering some Minister or Ministers to conclude them. The Emperor of Morocco, we understand, has expressed a Disposition to make a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States. A Mr. Montgomery, who is a Merchant settled at Alicant, has been, it seems, rather forward in proposing a Negotiation, without Authority for so doing, and has embarrass'd us a little, as may be seen

by some Letters I enclose.¹ Perhaps it would be well for the Congress to send a Message to that Prince, expressing their Respect and Regard for him, till such time as they may judge it convenient to appoint an Ambassador in form, furnish'd with proper Presents, to make a Treaty with him. The other Barbary States, too, seem to require Consideration, if we propose to carry on any Trade in the Mediterranean; but, whether the Security of that Trade is of sufficient importance to be worth purchasing at the Rate of the Tributes usually exacted by those piratical States, is a matter of doubt, on which I cannot at present form a Judgment.

I shall immediately proceed, in pursuance of the first Instruction, to take the proper Steps for acquainting his Imperial Majesty of Germany with the Dispositions of Congress, having some reason to believe the Overture may be acceptable. His Minister here is of late extreamly civil to me, and we are on very good Terms. I have likewise an intimate Friend at that Court.

With respect to other Powers, it seems best not to make Advances at present, but to meet and encourage them when made, which I shall not fail to do, as I have already done those of Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal. Possibly Ham-burgh, to whom I have forwarded the Letter of Congress, may send a Minister to America, if they wish for a Treaty, to conclude it there. They have no Minister here.

I have lately receiv'd a Memorial from the Minister of Denmark, respecting a Ship of that Nation, the *Providentia*, taken by one of our Privateers and carried into Boston. I enclose a Copy of it, and request to be furnished with Directions and Informations for the answer. It may be well to

¹ The letters from G. F. Crocco. — ED.

send me a Copy of the Proceedings in the Courts. From a Perusal of the Papers communicated with it, I am satisfied that the Cargo was clearly British Property.

We have hitherto enter'd into no Engagements respecting the arm'd Neutrality, and, in obedience to the fifth Instruction, we shall take care to avoid them hereafter. The Treaty between this Court and the United States, for regulating the Powers, Privileges, &c. of Consuls, is at length compleated, and is transcribing in order to be signed. I hope to transmit a Copy by the next Packet. I have received the Congress Ratification of the two Money Treaties, which will be soon exchanged, when I shall send Copies of them with that of Sweden.

I have given, and shall continue to give, Capt. Paul Jones all the Assistance in my Power, towards Recovering the Prize Money; and I hope it may soon be accomplish'd.

When Mr. Jay returns, I shall desire him to make the Enquiry directed in the fourth Instruction, respecting the Expedition under that Commodore, and report thereon to Congress. In the mean time I can answer respecting one of the Questions, that the King paid the whole Expence, and that no part of it has ever been plac'd to the Account of Congress. There exists indeed a Demand of one Puchelberg,¹ a Person in the Employ of M. Schweighauser, of about 30,000 Livres, for Provisions and other things furnish'd to Capt. Landais, after he took the *Alliance* out of the Hands of Capt. Jones: But, as the Ship was at that time under the King's Supply who, having borrow'd her for the Expedition when fitted for Sea and just ready to sail with Mr. Adams, had ordered her to be deliver'd in the same Condition, free of all Charges accru'd, or accruing, by her being in Holland and in L'Orient,

¹ See *supra*, Vol. VIII, p. 132. — ED.

and as M. Puchelberg had not only no Orders from me to furnish Capt. Landais, but acted contrary to my Orders given to M. Schweighauser, and contrary to the Orders of M. Schweighauser himself, I refused to pay his Account, which besides appeared extravagant, and it has never yet been paid.

I shall do my best in executing the third Instruction, respecting our Claim upon Denmark. I have written to London to obtain, if possible, an Acc^t of the Sums insured upon the Ships delivered up, as such an Acc^t may be some Guide in the Valuation of the Prizes.

A Captain Williams, formerly in the British Service, and employed upon the Lakes, has given me a Paper containing Information of the State of the back Country. As those Informations may possibly be of some use, I send herewith the Paper. Mr. Carmichael has sent me the Accounts of the Money Transactions at Madrid. As soon as Mr. Jay returns, they will be examined.

Be pleased to present my dutiful Respects to Congress, and assure them of my most faithful Services. With great Esteem and Regard, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.¹

1461. TO ROBERT MORRIS (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

SIR,

I have received your Favour of the 30th of September, for which I thank you. My Apprehension, that the Union be-

¹ The "Set of Instructions," alluded to in this letter, may be found in the "Diplomatic Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. X, p. 222. The resolutions respecting Hamburg and Paul Jones are contained in the "Secret Journal of Congress," Vol. III, pp. 416, 430.—S.

tween France and our States might be diminished by Accounts from hence, was occasioned by the extravagant and violent Language held here by a Public Person, in public Company, which had that Tendency; and it was natural for me to think his Letters might hold the same Language, in which I was right; for I have since had Letters from Boston informing me of it. Luckily here, and I hope there, it is imputed to the true Cause, a Disorder in the Brain, which, tho' not constant, has its Fits too frequent. I will not fill my Letter with an Account of those Discourses. Mr. Laurens, when you see him, can give it to you; I mean such as he heard in Company with other Persons, for I would not have him relate private Conversations. They distress'd me much at the time, being then at your earnest Instances soliciting for more aids of Money; the Success of which Solicitation such ungrateful and provoking Language might, I feared, have had a Tendency to prevent. Enough of this at present.

I have been exceedingly hurt and afflicted by the Difficulty some of your late Bills met with in Holland. As soon as I receiv'd the Letter from Messrs. Willinck & Co., which I inclose, I sent for Mr. Grand, who brought me a Sketch of his Account with you, by which it appear'd that the Demands upon us, existing and expected, would more than absorb the Funds in his Hands. We could not indulge the smallest Hope of obtaining further Assistance here, the Public Finances being in a state of Embarrassment, private Persons full of Distrust occasioned by the late Stoppage of Payment at the *Caisse d'Escompte*, and money in general extreamly scarce. But he agreed to do what I propos'd, lend his Credit in the Way of Drawing and Redrawing between Holland and Paris, to gain Time till you could furnish Funds to reimburse Messrs.

Willenck & Co. I believe he made this Proposition to them by the Return of the Express. I know not why it was not accepted. Mr. Grand, I suppose, will himself give you an Account of all the Transaction, and of his Application to Messrs. Couteulx & Co.; therefore, I need not add more upon this disagreeable Subject.

I have found Difficulties in settling the Account of Salaries with the other Ministers, that have made it impracticable for me to do it. I have, therefore, after keeping the Bills that were to have been proportioned among us long in my hands, given them up to Mr. Grand, who, finding the same Difficulties, will, I suppose, return them to you. None has come to hand for the two or three last Quarters, and we are indebted to his Kindness for advancing us Money, or we must have run in Debt for our Subsistence. He risques in doing this, since he has not for it your Orders.

There arise frequently contingent Expences, for which no provision has yet been made. In a former letter to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I gave a List of them, and desired to know the Pleasure of Congress concerning them. I have only had for Answer, that they were under Consideration, and that he believed House-Rent would not be allowed; but I am still in Uncertainty as to that and the Rest. I wish some resolutions were taken on this Point of Contingencies, that I may know how to settle my Accounts with Mr. Barclay. American Ministers in Europe are too remote from their Constituents to consult them, and take their Orders on every Occasion, as the Ministers here of European Courts can easily do. There seems, therefore, a Necessity of allowing more to their Discretion, and of giving them a Credit to a certain Amount on some Banker, who may answer their Orders;

for which, however, they should be accountable. I mention this for the sake of other Ministers, hoping and expecting soon to be discharg'd myself, and also for the Good of the Service.

The Remissness of our People in Paying Taxes is highly blameable; the Unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see, in some Resolutions of Town Meetings, a Remonstrance against giving Congress a Power to take, as they call it, the People's Money out of their Pockets, tho' only to pay the Interest and Principal of Debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the Point. Money, justly due from the People, is their Creditors' Money, and no longer the Money of the People, who, if they withhold it, should be compell'd to pay by some Law.

All Property, indeed, except the Savage's temporary Cabin, his Bow, his Matchcoat, and other little Acquisitions, absolutely necessary for his Subsistence, seems to me to be the Creature of public Convention. Hence the Public has the Right of Regulating Descents, and all other Conveyances of Property, and even of limiting the Quantity and the Uses of it. All the Property that is necessary to a Man, for the Conservation of the Individual and the Propagation of the Species, is his natural Right, which none can justly deprive him of: But all Property superfluous to such purposes is the Property of the Publick, who, by their Laws, have created it, and who may therefore by other Laws dispose of it, whenever the Welfare of the Publick shall demand such Disposition. He that does not like civil Society on these Terms, let him retire and live among Savages. He can have no right to the benefits of Society, who will not pay his Club towards the Support of it.

The Marquis de la F.,¹ who loves to be employ'd in our Affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several Conversations with the Ministers and Persons concern'd in forming new Regulations, respecting the Commerce between our two Countries, which are not yet concluded. I therefore thought it well to communicate to him a Copy of your Letter, which contains so many sensible and just Observations on that Subject. He will make a proper Use of them, and perhaps they may have more Weight, as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the Observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the Sentiments you have express'd on this Occasion.

You have made no Answer to the Proposition I sent of furnishing Tobacco to the Farmers General. They have since made a Contract with Mess^{rs} Alexander & Williams for the same Purpose but it is such a one as does not prevent their making another with you if hereafter it should suit you.

I am sorry for the Publick's sake, that you are about to quit your Office, but on personal Considerations I shall congratulate you; for I cannot conceive of a more happy Man, than he, who having been long loaded with public Cares, finds himself reliev'd from them, and enjoying private repose in the Bosom of his Friends and Family.

The Government here has set on foot a new Loan of an Hundred Millions. I enclose the Plan.

It is thought very advantageous for the Lenders. You may judge by that how much the Money is wanted, and how seasonable the Peace was for all concerned.

If Mr. Alexander, who is gone to Virginia, should happen

¹ Lafayette. — ED.

to come to Philadelphia, I beg leave to recommend him to your Civilities as an old Friend of mine whom I very much esteem.

With sincere Regard & Attachment, I am ever, Dear Sir,
Your most etc.

[B. F.]

1462. TO EBENEZER HAZARD¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Dec. 26, 1783

SIR,

I am desired by the General Post Office of Great Britain to recommend to your Consideration a Sketch of an Advertisement respecting the Packet Boats, which they think it may be useful to publish. You will do in it what you think proper. Perhaps you have already done what is necessary. As I was formerly long connected with that Office and have Friends in it, if I can be of Use in forwarding any Arrangements you have to propose for the Benefit of yours, you may command freely, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1463. TO THOMAS MIFFLIN (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 26, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you very sincerely on your Appointment to that very honourable Station, the Presidency of Congress. Every Testimony you receive of the public Sense of your Services and Talents, gives me Pleasure.

¹ From the original in the possession of Samuel Hazard, Esq., of Germantown, a great-grandson of Ebenezer Hazard. — ED.

I have written to you a long Letter on Business, in my quality of Minister. This is a private Letter, respecting my personal Concerns, which I presume to trouble you with on the Score of our ancient Friendship.

In a Letter of the 12th of March, 1781, I stated my Age and Infirmities to the Congress, and requested they would be pleased to recall me, that I might enjoy the little left me of the Evening of Life in Repose, and in the sweet Society of my Friends and Family. I was answered by the then President, that, when Peace should be made, if I persisted in the same Request, it should be granted; I acquiesc'd; the Preliminaries were signed in November, 1782, and I then repeated my Petition.¹ A year is past, and I have no Answer. Undoubtedly, if the Congress should think my continuing here necessary for the public Service, I ought, as a good Citizen, to submit to their Judgment and Pleasure; but, as they may easily supply my Place to advantage, that cannot be the Case. I suppose, therefore, that it is merely the multiplicity of more important Affairs, that has put my Request out of their Mind. What I would then desire of you is, to put this Matter in Train to be moved and answer'd as soon as possible, that I may arrange my Affairs accordingly.

In the first Letter above mentioned, to which I beg leave to refer you, I gave a Character of my Grandson, William Temple Franklin, and solicited for him the Favour and Protection of Congress. I have nothing to abate of that Character; on the contrary, I think him so much improv'd as to be capable of executing, with Credit to himself and Advantage to the Public, any Employment in Europe the Congress may think fit to honour him with. He has been seven Years

¹ See letter to Robert R. Livingston, dated December 5th, 1782. — ED.

in the Service, and is much esteem'd by all that know him, particularly by the Minister here, who, since my new Disorder (the Stone) makes my going to Versailles inconvenient to me, transacts our Business with him in the most obliging and friendly manner. It is natural for me, who love him, to wish to see him settled before I die, in some Employ that may probably be permanent; and I hope you will be so good to me, as to get that Affair likewise moved and carried thro' in his Favour.

He has, I think, this additional Merit to plead, that he has serv'd in my Office as Secretary several Years, for the small Salary of 300 Louis a Year, while the Congress gave 1000 a Year to the Secretaries of other Ministers, who had not half the Employ for a Secretary that I had. For it was long before a Consul was sent here, and we had all that Business on our hands, with a great deal of Admiralty Business in examining and condemning Captures, taken by our Cruisers and by the French Cruisers under American Commission; besides the constant Attendance in examining and recording the Acceptances of the Congress Bills of Exchange, which has been, from the immense Number, very fatiguing; with many other extra Affairs, not usually occurring to other Ministers, such as the Care of the Prisoners in England, and the constant Correspondence relating to them; in all of which he serv'd me as Secretary, with the Assistance only of a Clerk at low Wages (50 Louis a Year), so that the Saving has been very considerable to the Public. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1464. TO THOMAS MIFFLIN (D. S. W.)

Passy, December 26, 1783.

SIR,

If the Congress should think it fit to have a Consul for the United States in London, and do not appoint one of our own countrymen to that office, I beg leave to mention the Merits of Mr. William Hodgson,¹ a Merchant of that City, who has always been a zealous friend of America, was a principal promoter of the Subscription for the relief of American Prisoners, and Chairman of the Committee for dispensing the Money raised by that Subscription. He also took the Trouble of applying the Moneys I furnished him with when the Subscription was exhausted, and constantly assisted me in all the negociations I had with the British Ministers, in their favour, wherein he generally succeeded, being a man of weight and credit, very active, and much esteemed for his probity and Integrity. These his Services, continued steadily during the whole War, seem to entitle him to the favourable notice of Congress, when any occasion offers of doing him Service or pleasure. With great respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1465. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON² (P. C.)

Passy, Dec. 26, 1783.

DEAR POLLY,

In reading Mr. Viny's Letter, when I receiv'd it, I miss'd seeing yours, which was written behind it in a Corner. I

¹ See letter to William Hodgson, December 10, 1783. — ED.

² From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

thank you much for your kind Offer respecting my Grandson. I was fully resolv'd on sending him in September last, and engag'd Mr. Jay, one of my Colleagues, then going to England, to take him over in his Company. But, when it came to be propos'd to him, he show'd such an Unwillingness to leave me, and Temple such a Fondness for retaining him, that I concluded to keep him till I should go over myself. He behaves very well, and we love him very much.

I send herewith two different French Grammars, not knowing which to prefer, Opinions here being divided. Your French Master may take his Choice, and you will present the other to my Godson, as my New Year's Gift, with the two Volumes of *Synonymes Françaises*, an excellent Work. They will be left at Mr. Hodgson's, Merchant in Coleman Street, where you may have them on sending for them.

Adieu, my dear Friend. I long to see you and yours, but God only knows when that may happen. I am, nevertheless, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

January 1st, 1784. Health, and prosperity, and many happy years to my dear friend and her children, for whom I send the enclosed little books.

1466. TO SAMUEL COOPER (L. C.)

Passy, Dec. 26, 1783.

DEAR SIR:—I have received your Favour of the 16th October, and am much obliged by the Intelligence it contains.¹

¹ This letter is in A. P. S. The intelligence it contained was "that the House of Representatives for this State [Massachusetts] have this moment

I am happy to hear that your Government has agreed to furnish Congress with the Means of discharging the national Debt. The Obstruction that Measure met with in some of the States has had many mischievous Effects on this side the Water; it discouraged the Loan going on in Holland, and thereby occasioned a Protest of some of Mr. Morris' Bills. Nothing can recover our Credit in Europe and our Reputation in its Courts, but an immediate proof of our Honesty and Prudence by a general Provision in all the States for the punctual Payment of the Interest and the final regular Discharge of the Principal. I hope we will never deserve, nor any longer appear likely to deserve, the Reproof given to an Enthusiastical Knave in Pennsylvania, who being called upon for an old Debt, said to his Creditors: Thou must have a little more patience; I am not yet able to pay thee. Give me then your bond, says the Creditor, and pay me Interest. No, I cannot do that; I cannot in conscience either receive or pay Interest, it is against my Principle. You have then the Conscience of a Rogue, says the Creditor: You tell me it is against your Principle to pay Interest; and it being against your Interest to pay the Principal, I perceive you do not intend to pay me either one or t'other.

My young Friend, your Grandson, must have had a long Passage, since he was not arrived when you wrote. Indeed all the Vessels that left Europe for America about the time he did have had long Passages which makes me less uneasy on his account. I hope he is in your Arms long before this time. His father never made any Provision here for his

passed an Act for a Duty of 5 per cent on all goods imported for paying the Interest of our National Debt, according to the Requisition of Congress." — ED.

Return that I have heard of, and therefore I have drawn on you for the Ballance of the Account as you directed.

I wrote you a too long letter some time since, respecting Mr. A.'s Calumnies,¹ of which perhaps it was not necessary to take so much notice.

The Government of England is again disordered. The Lords have rejected the ministry's favorite Bill for demolishing the Power of the India Company. The Commons have resented it by some angry Resolutions, and it is just now reported here that the Ministers are dismissed and the Parliament dissolved. Of this we have not yet certain advice, but expect it hourly.

There are hopes that the War against the Turks will blow over; the rather, as all Flames are apt to spread, and the late belligerent powers have all need of a continued Peace; This however, is not certain, and it behoves us to preserve with Care our Friends and our Credit abroad, and our Union at home, as we know not how soon we may have occasion for all of them.

With great and sincere Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend,
yours, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1467. TO ELIAS BOUDINOT ² (P. C.)

Passy, Dec. 26, 1783.

SIR,

Your two Letters to the Commissioners, dated at Princeton the 27th of October and 1st of November, and one to me of the first of November came duly to Hand; Mr. Adams

¹ Mr. John Adams. — ED.

² From the original in the possession of Mr. George C. Thomas. — ED.

saw the public Letters in England, Capt. Jones having landed with them at Plymouth. We thank you much for the Intelligence they contain. I am now alone here, Mr. Jay being at Bath, with Mr. Laurens, and Mr. Adams either in England or Holland: But I have written fully to the new President respecting the Instructions etc. communicated with your Letters. And now, Sir, give me leave to congratulate you on the fortunate Events that have distinguished your Presidency, and on your honourable Retreat from it into private Life. The first well-improv'd may make us all happy, and the last must make you so; for I can hardly conceive a happier Being than the Man, who, having been long laden with public Cares and fatigu'd by every-body's Business, is allow'd to retire into the Bosom of his Family, and enjoy *Otium cum dignitate*.

With great and sincere Respect, I have the honour to be,
Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1468. TO MICHEL-GUILLAUME-JEAN DE
CRÈVECŒUR¹ (L. C.)

SIR:— I have perused the foregoing Memoir, and having formerly had some Share in the Management of the Pacquet Boats between England and America, I am enabled to furnish you with some small Remarks.

The Project is good, and if carried into Execution will certainly be very useful to Merchants immediately, and profit-

¹ This letter is without date, but it must have been written either late in December, 1783, or early in January, 1784. — ED.

able to the Revenue of the Post-Office at least after some time; because not only Commerce increases Correspondence, but Facility of Correspondence increases Commerce, and they go on mutually augmenting each other.

Four Packet Boats were at first thought sufficient between Falmouth and New York, so as [to] dispatch one regularly the first Wednesday in every Month. But by Experience it was found that a fifth was necessary; as without it, the Regularity was sometimes broken by Accidents of Wind and Weather, and the Merchants disappointed and their Affairs deranged, a Matter of great Consequence in Commerce. A fifth Packet was accordingly added.

It is probable, as you observe, that the English will keep up their Packets. In which Case I should think it advisable to order the Dispatch of the French Packets in the intermediate times, that is on the third Wednesdays. This would give the Merchants of Europe and America Opportunities of Writing every Fortnight. And the English who had miss'd Writing by their own Packet of the first Wednesday, or have new Matter to write which they wish to send before the next Month, will forward their Letters by the Post to France to go by the French Packet, and *vice versa*, which will encrease the Inland Postage of both Nations.

As these Vessels are not to be laden with Goods, their Holds may, without Inconvenience, be divided into separate Apartments after the Chinese Manner, and each of those Apartments caulked tight so as to keep out Water. In which case if a Leak should happen in one Apartment, that only would be affected by it, and the others would be free; so that the Ship would not be so subject as others, to founder

and sink at Sea.¹ This being known would be a great Encouragement to Passengers.

I send you a Copy of a Chart of the Gulf Stream, which is little known by European Navigators, and yet of great Consequence; since in going to America they often get into that Stream and unknowingly stem it, whereby the Ship is much retarded and the Voyage lengthened enormously.

The directions being imperfectly translated and expressed in French, I have put them more correctly in English. I have the honour to be, etc.,

1469. ON IMMIGRATION

(L. C.)

TO AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT

Your Queries concerning the Value of Land in different Circumstances & Situations, Modes of Settlement, &c. &c. are quite out of my Power to answer; having while I lived in America been always an Inhabitant of Capital Cities, and not in the way of learning any thing correctly of Country Affairs. There is a Book lately published in London, written by Mr. Hector St. John, its Title, *Letters from an American Farmer*,² which contains a good deal of Information on those Subjects; and as I know the Author to be an observing intelligent Man, I suppose the Information to be

¹ See "Maritime Observations," letter to David Le Roy. — ED.

² "Letters from an American Farmer, describing certain provincial situations, manners and customs not generally known; . . . written for the information of a friend in England, by J-Hector Saint John, a farmer in Pennsylvania." London, Thomas Davies, 1782. — ED.

good as far as it goes, and I recommend the Book to your perusal.

There is no doubt but great Tracts may be purchased on the Frontiers of Virginia, & the Carolinas, at moderate Rates. In Virginia it used to be at 5*£* Sterling the 100 Acres. I know not the present Price, but do not see why it should be higher.

Emigrants arriving pay no Fine or Premium for being admitted to all the Privileges of Citizens. Those are acquired by two Years Residence.

No Rewards are given to encourage new Settlers to come among us, whatever degree of Property they may bring with them, nor any Exemptions from common Duties. Our Country offers to Strangers nothing but a good Climate, fertile Soil, wholesome Air, Free Governments, wise Laws, Liberty, a good People to live among, and a hearty Welcome. Those Europeans who have these or greater Advantages at home, would do well to stay where they are.

1470. TO JOHN JAY¹ (L. C.)

DEAR SIR,

Passy, Jan. 6, 1784.

I received your kind letter of the 26th past,² and immediately sent that inclosed to Mrs. Jay, whom I saw a few days since with the children, all perfectly well. It is a happy thing that the little ones are so finely past the small-pox, and I congratulate you upon it most cordially.

It is true, as you have heard, that I have the stone, but not that I have had thoughts of being cut for it. It is as yet very tolerable. It gives me no pain but when in a Carriage

¹ Only an incomplete transcript exists in L. C. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

on the Pavement, or when I make some sudden quick movement. If I can prevent its growing larger, which I hope to do by abstemious living and gentle exercise, I can go on pretty comfortably with it to the end of my Journey, which can now be at no great distance. I am chearful, enjoy the company of my Friends, sleep well, have sufficient appetite, and my Stomach performs well its Functions. The latter is very material to the preservation of Health. I therefore take no Drugs, lest I should disorder it. You may judge that my Disease is not very grievous, since I am more afraid of the Medicines than of the Malady.

It gives me pleasure to learn from you, that my Friends still retain their Regard for me. I long to see them again, but I doubt I shall hardly accomplish it. If our Commission for the Treaty of Commerce were arrived, and we were at liberty to treat in England, I might then come over to you, supposing the English Ministry disposed to enter into such a Treaty.

I have, as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American*; I have also two or three in America, who are my Enemies as a *Minister*; but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my Enemies as a *Man*; for by his grace, thro' a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human Being who can justly say, "Ben. Franklin has wrong'd me." This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable Reflection. You too have, or may have, your Enemies; but let not that render you unhappy. If you make a right use of them, they will do you more good than harm. They point out to us our Faults; they put us upon our guard, and help us to live more correctly.

My Grandsons are sensible of the honor of your Remembrance, and join their respectful Compliments and best wishes with those of, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1471. TO SAMUEL CHASE¹ (A. P. S.)

Passy, Jan. 6, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I duly receiv'd your Letter of the 18th of September,² with the Papers that accompanied it: but being at that time afflicted with two painful Disorders, the Gout and Gravel, I could not then give any Attention to Business; and, before my Recovery, the Letters and Papers were both most unaccountably missing. I spent Hours, from time to time, in searching for them, and delay'd writing in continual Hopes of finding them, which I was not able to do till within these few Days, when on removing a writing-press in my Closet, I discover'd that they had fallen and lay conceal'd behind it.

I had deliver'd the Letter you enclos'd to the Marquis de la Fayette, and, as the Court was then at Fontainebleau, and I could not follow it by reason of my Illness, I requested him to sound M^r le Marquis de Castries on the subject of the Loss of your Ship.³ He did so; and the Result of the Conversation was, that, if you thought fit to prosecute the Matter,

¹ Samuel Chase (1741-1811), signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the companion of Franklin and Charles Carrol in their mission to Canada. — ED.

² A long letter, written from London, and now in A. P. S. — ED.

³ The *Matilda*, a ship owned by Dorsey, Wheeler & Co., of Baltimore, of which company Chase was a member. The ship was captured by a British frigate, *The Perseverance*. — ED.

you should present a Memorial, upon which he might regularly take the Affair into Consideration. You mentioned your coming to Paris before finishing your other Business, in case I should think there was a Probability of obtaining Compensation, either from the Property of the Captain, or the Generosity of the Prince. I have not yet been able to learn any thing of the Captain's Circumstances; and as clear Proof of his Delinquency must precede an Application to the King, and perhaps the Protest of Captain Belt will hardly be thought sufficient Testimony, and other Evidences corroborating cannot be obtained but with great Expense & Loss of Time, and the Chicanery practis'd in the Courts here to procure Delay is immense and endless; on these Considerations I cannot advise your coming hither for the Purpose of such a Prosecution to the Prejudice of your other Affairs; tho' I shall be happy to see you, when it may be convenient to you, and, when you are here, we will take the Advice of some judicious Persons, and if it appears possible for me to serve your Cause, I shall do it with great Pleasure.

M. de Rochambeau was not in Town, but I forwarded Mr. Carrol's letter to him. I have written, as you desired, to Brest, and as soon as I receive an Answer, I will communicate it to you. I am not enough acquainted with the French Laws or Customs to inform you what Claims the Widow of M. le Vache¹ may have on his Property. I only think I have heard, that Marriages by a Protestant Minister are not deemed valid. I will make inquiry.

Since writing the above, I am inform'd that, if celebrated

¹ M. Jean Levache de Vanburn, volunteer in the Artillery of Maryland, and captain in the army, married Ann Howard of Annapolis. He was believed to have perished at sea, — ED.

in a Protestant Country according to the Laws of that Country, they are deem'd valid here; as are also the Marriages of Protestants here, if in the Chapel of a Protestant Ambassador.

I shall be glad to hear, that you have succeeded in Recovering the Publick Money, and that you continue to enjoy your Health, being, with sincere and great Esteem, dear Sir,
&c. B. FRANKLIN.

1472. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Jan. 7, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have this moment rec^d your favour of the 25th past, acquainting me with the change in administration. I am [not] sure that in reforming the constitution, which is sometimes talked of, it w^d not be better to make your great officers of state hereditary, than to suffer the inconvenience of such frequent and total changes. Much Faction and Cabal w^d be prevented by having a hereditary First L^d of the Treasury, a hereditary L^d Chancellor, Privy Seal, President of the Council, Secretary of State, First L^d of the Admiralty, &c. &c. It will not be said that the duties of these officers being important, we cannot trust to nature for the chance of requisite talents, since we have a hereditary set of judges in the last resort, the House of Peers; an hereditary King; and in a certain German University an hereditary professor of Mathematics.

We have not yet heard of the arrival of our Express in America, who carried the Definitive Treaty. He sailed the

¹ From a copy in Hartley's handwriting, in the collection of Mrs. L. Z. Leiter. — ED.

26th of September. As soon as the ratification arrives, I shall immediately send you word of it. With great esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1473. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 16, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have this day received your Favor of the 2d Inst. Every Information in my power, respecting the Balloons, I sent you just before Christmas, contained in Copies of my letters to Sir Joseph Banks. There is no Secret in the Affair, and I make no doubt that a Person coming from you would easily obtain a sight of the different Balloons of Montgolfier and Charles, with all the Instructions wanted; and, if you undertake to make one, I think it extremely proper and necessary to send an ingenious man here for that purpose: otherwise, for want of attention to some particular circumstance, or of not being acquainted with it, the Experiment might miscarry, which, in an affair of so much public Expectation, would have bad consequences, draw upon you a great deal of Censure, and affect your Reputation. It is a serious thing to draw out from their Affairs all the Inhabitants of a great City and its Environs, and a Disappointment makes them angry. At Bordeaux lately a person who pretended to send up a balloon, and had received Money from many People, not being able to make it rise, the populace were so exasperated that they pulled down his house, and had like to have killed him.

It appears, as you observe, to be a discovery of great Importance, and what may possibly give a new turn to human

Affairs. Convincing Sovereigns of the Folly of wars may perhaps be one Effect of it; since it will be impracticable for the most potent of them to guard his Dominions. Five thousand Balloons, capable of raising two Men each, could not cost more than Five Ships of the Line; and where is the Prince who can afford so to cover his Country with Troops for its Defence, as that Ten Thousand Men descending from the Clouds might not in many places do an infinite deal of mischief, before a Force could be brought together to repel them? It is a pity that any national Jealousy should, as you imagine it may, have prevented the English from prosecuting the Experiment, since they are such ingenious Mechanicians, that in their hands it might have made a more rapid progress towards Perfection, and all the Utility it is capable of affording.

The Balloon of Messrs. Charles and Robert was really filled with inflammable air. The Quantity being great, it was expensive, and tedious filling, requiring two or three days and nights constant Labour. It had a *soupepe*, [or valve,] near the top, which they could open by pulling a string and thereby let out some air when they had a mind to descend; and they discharged some of their Ballast of Sand when they would rise again. A great deal of Air must have been let out when they landed, so that the loose part might envelope one of them: yet, the car being lightened by that one getting out of it, there was enough left to carry up the other rapidly. They had no Fire with them. That is only used in M. Montgolfier's globe, which is open at Bottom, and straw constantly burnt to keep it up. This kind is sooner and cheaper filled; but must be much bigger to carry up the same weight; since Air rarified by Heat is only twice as light as common Air, and

inflamable Air is ten times lighter. M. de Morveau, a famous Chemist at Dijon, has found an inflamable Air that will cost only a 25th part of the Price of what is made by oil of Vitriol poured on Iron Filings. They say it is made from Sea Coal. Its comparative Weight is not mentioned.

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1474. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 17, 1784.

SIR; — I received the Letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me the 15th Instant, inclosing one from a certain Schaffer, who calls himself Lieutenant-Colonel of the Continental Militia, requesting that you would cause to be returned to him a Bill of Exchange for 60 Dollars that has my Name on it, and which with his other Papers, has been seiz'd and deposited in the "Greffé criminel du chatelet," and complaining that neither the consul nor myself afford him any Protection; and you are pleased to desire my Sentiments on the Affair.

This same Schaffer has been in Paris now about three Years, but this is the first time I have heard any mention of his military Character; he brought a little Money with him, as I understood, to purchase Goods, but he soon fell into the hands of a Set of Sharpers, and being a young Man of very little Understanding, having neither Good Sense enough to be an honest Man nor Wit enough for a Rogue, though with a strong Inclination, they first cheated him (as he complained

to me) and then join'd with him to cheat others. For this purpose they got his Name inserted in the Almanack Royal of 1782 and 1783 among the Bankers, and the Title of *John Schaffer & Compagnie, Commissionaires des États-Unis de l'Amerique, Rue des Fosses, St. Marcel*, to which Title they had not the smallest Pretence; but it served to give them some Credit with the honest but ignorant Shop-keepers of Paris, with whose Complaints of our *Commissionaires* not Paying I have been greatly troubled. It is by thus running in Debt, and by borrowing where he could, that he has for some time subsisted; and I understand that for some of these *Escroqueries* he is now in Prison. When he was there the first time, about two Years ago, not having then so bad an Opinion of him, I interested myself in his Favour, endeavored to accommodate his Affairs, and lent him some Money in his Distress, which he never repaid, and yet on various Pretences of Sickness and Misery has obtained more from me lately, but I am now quite tired of him as is also Mr. Barclay, and if I have refused to make use of any Interest I may be supposed to have to screen him from Punishment, it is because I think it prostituting the interest of a minister to employ it in protection of knaves; and I am really ashamed to appear in his favour, and afraid that my doing it would tend to lessen the weight of any Application I might hereafter have occasion to make in behalf of an honest Man. The Bill he mentions is I suppose one of the Loan-Office Interest Bills sent to him by his Brother thro' the hands of Mr. Barclay, which I accepted, and it will be paid when presented to Mr. Grand. I make no Objection to its being deliver'd up to him, though the Creditors, perhaps, who prosecute him may, for whose Use probably his Effects have been seized.

The Account he gives of his Riches, is I believe, altogether as fictitious as his Character [of] *Lieut.-Colonel and Commissaire des États-U[nis]* but that his father and Brother-in-law are resp[ectable] persons in Pennsylvania is true. Mr. Barclay [has] some Knowledge of them: for their sakes if [the] Punishment of the *carcan*, which I [hear is] intended for him, could be commuted for [a] less *fletrissant*, a longer Banishment, or [such] like, I should be glad, and if your Excellency can obtain this for him without too much Trouble I shall, in their Behalf, acknowledge it as a Favour.

With great Respect, I am, sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — I return the Letter endors'd. I take it to be written by one Beaumont, his advocate.

1475. TO MRS. GEORGIANA HARE-NAYLOR¹
(L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 25, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your Letter of the 12th Inst. came duly to hand. I congratulate you & M^r Hare on your Marriage, & wish you every Felicity.

I will answer your Enquiries as well as I can. The Cultivators of Land are a respectable Part of our People in Pensilvania, being generally Proprietors of the Land they cultivate, out of whom are chosen the Majority of our Magis-

¹ Georgiana Shipley, daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph, married in 1783 Francis Hare-Naylor (1753-1815) of Hurstmonceaux, Sussex, author of plays, novels, and "History of the Helvetic Republics." — ED.

trates, Legislators, &c. And a Year's Residence gives a Stranger all the Rights of a Citizen. I am not much acquainted with Country Affairs, having been always an Inhabitant of Cities; but I imagine a good Plantation ready form'd, with a Dwelling House, &c. may be bought for half the Sum you mention to be now in your Possession, and that the other half would amply furnish the Stock &c. necessary for working the Land to Advantage. A Farm of two or three Hundred Acres, in the hands of a Man who understands Agriculture and will attend to it, is capable of furnishing Subsistence to a Family. If this may be the Case with M^r Hare, you see that your 300£ a Year¹ will be an accumulating Fund, providing for the Establishment of Children, and for a Retirement of Ease & Comfort in Old Age. The Law is also an honourable Profession with us, and more profitable than Agriculture; and if M^r Hare is already acquainted with the English Common Law, which is the Basis of ours, he might be admitted to practice immediately, and would find but little Difficulty in acquiring a Knowledge of our few Additions to, or Variations of that Law; I have known in my time several considerable Estates made by that Profession. But the Study is dry and laborious and long, that is requisite to arrive at Eminence; and if M^r Hare has not already gone thro' it, he will consider whether he has the Habits of Application, Industry & Perseverance that are necessary. Not knowing his Character & Disposition it is impossible for me to advise well, or to judge whether sitting down quietly in some cheap part of Europe, and living prudently on two-thirds of your Income, may not be preferable to any Scheme in America.

¹ An annuity settled upon the Hare-Naylors by the Duchess of Devonshire after the Bishop of St. Asaph had refused to recognize Hare. — ED.

I can only say, that if I should be there when you are, my best Counsels and Services will not be wanting, and to see you happily settled & prosperous there would give me infinite Pleasure; but I have not yet obtained Leave to go home, and am besides in my 80th Year; of course if I ever arrive there my stay can be but short. While I do exist, wherever it is, you will find me with unalterable Esteem & Affection, my dear Friend,

Yours most sincerely.

B. FRANKLIN.

1476. TO MRS. SARAH BACHE (L. C.)

Passy, Jan. 26, 1784.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your Care in sending me the Newspapers is very agreeable to me. I received by Capt. Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati*. My Opinion of the Institution cannot be of much Importance; I only wonder that, when the united Wisdom of our Nation had, in the Articles of Confederation, manifested their Dislike of establishing Ranks of Nobility, by Authority either of the Congress or of any particular State, a Number of private Persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their Posterity, from their fellow Citizens, and form an Order of *hereditary Knights*, in direct Opposition to the solemnly declared Sense of their Country! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the Good Sense of most of those drawn into it by the Persuasion of its Projectors, who have been too much struck with the Ribbands and Crosses they have seen among them hanging to the Buttonholes of Foreign Officers. And I suppose those, who disapprove of

it, have not hitherto given it much Opposition, from a Principle somewhat like that of your good Mother, relating to punctilious Persons, who are always exacting little Observances of Respect; that, “*if People can be pleased with small Matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*”

In this View, perhaps, I should not myself, if my Advice had been ask'd, have objected to their wearing their Ribband and Badge according to their Fancy, tho' I certainly should to the entailing it as an Honour on their Posterity. For Honour, worthily obtain'd (as for Example that of our Officers), is in its Nature a *personal* Thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some Share in obtaining it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long Experience the wisest of Nations, honour does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his Learning, his Wisdom, or his Valour, is promoted by the Emperor to the Rank of Mandarin, his Parents are immediately entitled to all the same Ceremonies of Respect from the People, that are establish'd as due to the Mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the Education, Instruction, and good Example afforded him by his Parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the Publick.

This *ascending* Honour is therefore useful to the State, as it encourages Parents to give their Children a good and virtuous Education. But the *descending Honour*, to Posterity who could have no Share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that Posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employ'd in useful Arts, and thence falling into Poverty, and all the Meannesses, Servility, and Wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *Noblesse*

in Europe. Or if, to keep up the Dignity of the Family, Estates are entailed entire on the Eldest male heir, another Pest to Industry and Improvement of the Country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride and Beggary, and idleness, that have half depopulated [and *decultivated*] Spain; occasioning continual Extinction of Families by the Discouragements of Marriage [and neglect in the improvement of estates].¹

I wish, therefore, that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their Project, would direct the Badges of their Order to be worn by their Parents, instead of handing them down to their Children. It would be a good Precedent, and might have good Effects. It would also be a kind of Obedience to the Fourth Commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honour* our Father and Mother, but has nowhere directed us to honour our Children. And certainly no mode of honouring those immediate Authors of our Being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy Actions, which reflect Honour on those who gave us our Education; or more becoming, than that of manifesting, by some public Expression or Token, that it is to their Instruction and Example we ascribe the Merit of those Actions.

But the Absurdity of *descending Honours* is not a mere Matter of philosophical Opinion; it is capable of mathematical Demonstration. A Man's Son, for instance, is but half of his Family, the other half belonging to the Family of his Wife. His Son, too, marrying into another Family, his Share in the Grandson is but a fourth; in the Great Grandson, by the same Process, it is but an Eighth; in the next Generation a Sixteenth; the next a Thirty-second; the next

¹ Passages in brackets are not found in the draft in L. C. — ED.

a Sixty-fourth; the next an Hundred and twenty-eighth; the next a Two hundred and Fifty-sixth; and the next a Five hundred and twelfth; thus in nine Generations, which will not require more than 300 years (no very great Antiquity for a Family), our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnati's Share in the then existing Knight, will be but a 512th part; which, allowing the present certain Fidelity of American Wives to be insur'd down through all those Nine Generations, is so small a Consideration, that methinks no reasonable Man would hazard for the sake of it the disagreeable Consequences of the Jealousy, Envy, and Ill will of his Countrymen.

Let us go back with our Calculation from this young Noble, the 512th part of the present Knight, thro' his nine Generations, till we return to the year of the Institution. He must have had a Father and Mother, they are two. Each of them had a father and Mother, they are four. Those of the next preceding Generation will be eight, the next Sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and Twenty-eight, the next Two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this Retrocession Five hundred and twelve, who must be now existing, and all contribute their Proportion of this future *Chevalier de Cincinnati*. These, with the rest, make together as follows:

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total	1022

One Thousand and Twenty-two Men and Women, contributors to the formation of one Knight. And, if we are to have a Thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing One million and Twenty-two Thousand Fathers and Mothers, who are to contribute to their Production, unless a Part of the Number are employ'd in making more Knights than One. Let us strike off then the 22,000, on the Supposition of this double Employ, and then consider whether, after a reasonable Estimation of the Number of Rogues, and Fools, and Royalists and Scoundrels and Prostitutes, that are mix'd with, and help to make up necessarily their Million of Predecessors, Posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble Blood of the then existing Set of Chevaliers de Cincinnatus. [The future genealogists, too, of these Chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honour through so many generations (even supposing honour capable in its nature of descending), will only prove the small share of this honour, which can be justly claimed by any one of them; since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear that, in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honour of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity.] I hope, therefore, that the Order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves, as the Knights of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, St. Louis, and other Orders of Europe do, with a Life Enjoyment of their little Badge and Ribband, and let the Distinction die with those who have merited it. This I imagine will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a Convenience, when I go into a Company where there may be Faces unknown to me, if I

discover, by this Badge, the Persons who merit some particular Expression of my Respect; and it will save modest Virtue the Trouble of calling for our Regard, by awkward round-about Intimations of having been heretofore employ'd in the Continental Service.

The Gentleman, who made the Voyage to France to provide the Ribands and Medals, has executed his Commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such Things are criticis'd. Some find Fault with the Latin, as wanting classic Elegance and Correctness; and, since our Nine Universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the Mottos had not been in English. Others object to the Title, as not properly assumable by any but Gen. Washington, [and a few others] who serv'd without Pay. Others object to the *Bald Eagle* as looking too much like a *Dindon*, or Turkey. For my own part, I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as the Representative of our Country; he is a Bird of bad moral Character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perch'd on some dead Tree, near the River where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing-Hawk; and, when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the support of his Mate and young ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this Injustice he is never in good Case; but, like those among Men who live by Sharping and Robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank Coward; the little *KingBird*, not bigger than a Sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the District. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *Kingbirds* from our

Country; though exactly fit for that Order of Knights, which the French call *Chevaliers d'Industrie*.

I am, on this account, not displeas'd that the Figure is not known as a Bald Eagle, but looks more like a Turk'y. For in Truth, the Turk'y is in comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America. Eagles have been found in all Countries, but the Turk'y was peculiar to ours; the first of the Species seen in Europe being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and serv'd up at the Wedding Table of Charles the Ninth.¹ He is, [though a little vain and silly, it is true, but not the worse emblem for that,] a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards, who should presume to invade his FarmYard with a *red* Coat on.

I shall not enter into the Criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may [not have the merit of being] be no great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much, [as brave soldiers,] from their Country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *Fame* for their "*Virtutis Premium*," which is one of their Latin Mottos. Their "*Esto perpetua*," another, is an excellent Wish, if they meant it for their Country; bad, if intended for their Order. The States should not only restore to them the *Omnia* of their first Motto,² which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not

¹ A learned friend of the Editor's has observed to him, that this is a mistake, as *Turkeys* were found in great plenty by Cortes, when he invaded and conquered Mexico, before the time of Charles the Twelfth. That this, and their being brought to old Spain, is mentioned by Peter Martyr of Anghiera, who was Secretary of the Council to the Indies, established immediately after the discovery of America, *and personally acquainted with Columbus*. — W. T. F.

² "*Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam*." — ED.

be suffered to remain, with [all] their new-created Chivalry, *entirely* in the Situation of the Gentleman in the Story, which their *omnia reliquit* reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some Story. He had built a very fine House, and thereby much impair'd his Fortune. He had a Pride, however, in showing it to his Acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remark'd a Motto over the Door, "OIA VANITAS." "What," says he, "is the Meaning of this OIA? it is a word I don't understand." "I will tell you," said the Gentleman; "I had a mind to have the Motto cut on a Piece of smooth Marble, but there was not room for it between the Ornaments, to be put in Characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a Contraction antiently very common in Latin Manuscripts, by which the *m*'s and *n*'s in Words are omitted, and the Omission noted by a little Dash above, which you may see there; so that the Word is *omnia*, OMNIA VANITAS." "O," says his Friend, "I now comprehend the Meaning of your motto, it relates to your Edifice; and signifies, that, if you have abridged your *Omnia*, you have, nevertheless, left your VANITAS legible at full length." I am, as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

1477. TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Feb. 1, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I receiv'd duly yours of the 23rd past, as well as those therein mentioned, with the Enclosed for the Office of Foreign

¹ From the original in the autograph collection of Mr. Simon Gratz. — ED.

Affairs, all of which except the last are forwarded, and that will go next Wednesday. I thank you for the Opportunity given me of seeing the Intelligence they contain. I sent you 5 or 6 Weeks since, a Packet containing some fresh American Newspapers. You do not mention receiving them. They went by a Person whose Name I have forgot. He had formerly been in the House of Messrs de Neufville. I wrote at the same time a few Lines. I am ever, Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble

Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I condole with you on the Loss of the Ship mention'd in the enclos'd Newspaper.

1478. TO HENRY LAURENS¹ (L. C.)

Passy, February 12, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favour of the 3d instant by your son, with the newspapers, for which I thank you. The disorders of that government, whose constitution has been so much praised, are come to a height that threatens some violent convulsion, if not a dissolution; and its Physicians do not even seem to guess at the cause of the disease, and therefore prescribe insufficient remedies, such as *place bills, more equal representation, more frequent elections, &c. &c.* In my humble opinion, the malady consists in the *enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage* of great offices. Ambition and avarice are separately strong passions. When they are united in pursuit

¹ From a transcript in L. C. — ED.

of the same object, they are too strong to be governed by common prudence, or influenced by public spirit and love of country; they drive men irresistibly into factions, cabals, dissensions, and violent divisions, always mischievous to public councils, destructive to the peace of society, and sometimes fatal to its existence. As long as the immense profits of these offices subsist, members of the shortest and most equally chosen parliaments will have them in view, and contend for them, and their contentions will have all the same ruinous consequences.

To me, then, there seems to be but one effectual remedy, and that not likely to be adopted by so corrupt a nation; which is, to abolish these profits, and make every place of *honour* a place of *burthen*. By that means the effect of one of the passions above-mentioned would be taken away, and something would be added to counteract the other. Thus the number of competitors for great offices would be diminished, and the efforts of those who still would obtain them moderated.

Thank God we have now less connection with the affairs of these people and are more at liberty to take care of our own, which I hope we shall manage better.

We have a terrible winter here; such another in this country is not remembered by any man living. The snow has been thick upon the ground ever since Christmas; and the frost constant. My Grandson joins in best compliments to yourself and Miss Laurens. With sincere esteem and affection, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1479. TO WILLIAM STRAHAN (L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 16, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I receiv'd and read with Pleasure your kind Letter of the first Inst,¹ as it inform'd me of the Welfare of you and yours. I am glad the Accounts you have from your Kinswoman at Philadelphia² are agreeable, and I shall be happy if any Recommendations from me can be serviceable to Dr. Ross,³ or any other friend of yours, going to America.

Your arguments, persuading me to come once more to England, are very powerful. To be sure, I long to see again my Friends there, whom I love abundantly; but there are difficulties and Objections of several kinds, which at present I do not see how to get over.

I lament with you the political Disorders England at present labours under. Your Papers are full of strange Accounts of Anarchy and Confusion in America, of which we know nothing, while your own Affairs are really in a Situation deplorable. In my humble Opinion, the Root of the Evil lies not so much in too long, or too unequally chosen Parliaments, as in the enormous Salaries, Emoluments, and Patronage of your great Offices; and that you will never be at rest till they are all abolish'd, and every place of Honour made at the

¹ A. P. S. — ED.

² Strahan had acknowledged warmly "the very friendly and effectual patronage" Franklin's family in America had afforded his "poor, helpless and singularly distressed kinswoman, than whom none can be more grateful, or more deserving the great kindness you have shewn her." — ED.

³ Dr. Ross had spent some time in the East as physician to the army; his health failing, he returned to follow his profession in North America. — ED.

same time, instead of a Place of Profit, a place of Expence and burthen.

Ambition and avarice are each of them strong Passions, and when they are united in the same Persons, and have the same Objects in view for their Gratification, they are too strong for Public Spirit and Love of Country, and are apt to produce the most violent Factions and Contentions. They should therefore be separated, and made to act one against the other. Those Places, to speak in our old stile (Brother Type), may be for the good of the *Chapel*, but they are bad for the Master, as they create constant Quarrels that hinder the Business. For example, here are near two Months that your Government has been employed in *getting its form to press*; which is not yet fit to *work on*, every Page of it being *squabbled*, and the whole ready to fall into *pye*. The Founts too must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts*, since your *Compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower case Letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forc'd to be continually *turning for them*. However, to return to common (tho' perhaps too saucy) Language, don't despair; you have still one resource left, and that not a bad one, since it may reunite the Empire. We have some Remains of Affection for you, and shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in Case of Distress. So if you have not Sense and Virtue enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy Constitution, and *send members to Congress*.

You will say my *Advice* "smells of *Madeira*." You are right. This foolish Letter is mere chitchat *between ourselves* over the *second bottle*. If, therefore, you show it to anybody, (except our indulgent Friends, Dagge and Lady

Strahan) I will positively *Solless* you. Yours ever most affectionately,

B. F[RANKLIN.]

1480. TO JEAN BAPTISTE LE ROY (A. P. S.)

Passy, Feb. 25, 1784

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed I send you a Letter¹ and sundry Papers I lately rec^d from M^r Eckhardt of Utrecht, a most ingenious Mechanician whom I first knew in London. You will see what he desires and what Answer I have made him. If you can do him any Service, I need not pray you to do it, because you have a Pleasure in assisting Genius. Show if you please what he says of the Baloons, to M^r Montgolfier. I long to see you, being ever

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1481. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (A. P. S.)

Passy, Feb. 26, 1784.

SIR: — Mr. Williams, desiring no farther Surseance against the Bulk of his Creditors, with whom he has amicably arranged his Affairs, and to whom he proposes to do exact Justice, I the more willingly join my Request with his, that he may be secured against the small Number remaining, who aim at forcing him to favour them to the Prejudice of the others. I am, with great Respect, Sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ The postscript to this letter from Eckhardt, January 18, 1784, is in A. P. S. — ED.

1482. TO JOHN PAUL JONES¹

Passy, March 4, 1784.

SIR:— I return herewith the paper you communicated to me yesterday. I perceive by the extract from M. de Sartine's letter that it was his intention that all the charges which had accrued upon the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* should be deducted from the prize-money payable to the captors, particularly the expense of victualling the seamen and prisoners, and that the liquidation of those charges should be referred to me. This liquidation, however, never was referred to me, and, if it had been, I should have been cautious of acting in it, having received no power from the captors, either French or Americans, authorizing me to decide upon anything respecting their interests. And I certainly should not have agreed to charge the American captors with any part of the expense of maintaining the 600 prisoners in Holland till they should be exchanged for Americans in England, as was your intention, and as we both had been made to expect. With great esteem I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1483. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN²

DEAR SIR,

Passy, March 5, 1784.

You mention, that I may now see verified all you said about binding down England to so hard a peace. I suppose you do

¹ Printed from "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. VIII, p. 452.—ED.

² From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 457.—ED.

not mean by the American treaty; for we were exceeding favourable, in not insisting on the reparations so justly due for the wanton burnings of our fine towns, and devastations of our plantations in a war, now universally allowed to have been originally unjust. I may add, that you will also see verified all I said about the article respecting the royalists, that it will occasion more mischief than it was intended to remedy, and that it would have been better to have omitted all mention of them. England might have rewarded them according to their merits at no very great expense. After the harms they had done to us, it was imprudent to insist on our doing them good.

I am sorry for the overturn you mention of those beneficial systems of commerce, that would have been exemplary to mankind. The making England entirely a free port would have been the wisest step ever taken for its advantage.

I wish much to see what you say a respectable friend of mine has undertaken to write respecting the peace. It is a pity it has been delayed. If it had appeared earlier, it might have prevented much mischief, by securing our friends in their situations; for we know not who will succeed them, nor what credit they will hold.

By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those whom I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there, I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you. Make my compliments and respects acceptable to Mrs. Vaughan. I know not what foundation there can be for saying that I abuse England as much as before the peace.

I am not apt, I think, to be abusive; of the two, I had rather be abused.

Enclosed are the letters you desire. I wish to hear from you more frequently, and to have, through you, such new pamphlets, as you may think worth my reading. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN

1484. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (A. P. S.)

Passy, March 5, 1784.

SIR, I received the letter which your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me,¹ respecting the necessity of producing legal proof of the arrangement made with the creditors mentioned in Mr. Williams' state of his affairs. I am much obliged by the attention you are so good as to afford this business on my recommendation, and I send herewith the original of those arrangements, for your inspection. With great respect, I am, sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — These papers being Mr. Williams' only discharge, he requests they may be returned to him after examination.

1485. TO CHARLES THOMSON²

SIR,

Passy, March 9, 1784.

I received a few days since a letter from Annapolis, dated June the 5th, in your handwriting, but not signed, acquaint-

¹ A letter dated March 4, 1784, and written in reply to Franklin's letter of February 26, 1784. — ED.

² From "Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States" (Sparks), Vol. I, p. 377. — ED.

ing the Commissioners with the causes of delay in sending the ratification of the definitive treaty. The term was expired before that letter came to hand; but I hope no difficulty will arise from a failure in a point not essential, and which was occasioned by accidents. I have just received from Mr. Hartley a letter on the subject, of which I enclose a copy.

We have had a terrible winter, too, here, such as the oldest men do not remember, and indeed it has been very severe all over Europe.

I have exchanged ratifications with the ambassador of Sweden, and enclose a copy of that I received from him.

Mr. Jay is lately returned from England. Mr. Laurens is still there, but proposes departing for America next month, as does also Mr. Jay, with his family. Mr. Adams is in Holland, where he has been detained by business and bad weather. These absences have occasioned some delays in our business, but not of much importance.

The war long expected between the Turks and Russians is prevented by a treaty, and it is thought an accommodation will likewise take place between them and the Emperor. Everything here continues friendly and favourable to the United States. I am pestered continually with numbers of letters from people in different parts of Europe, who would go to settle in America, but who manifest very extravagant expectations, such as I can by no means encourage, and who appear otherwise to be very improper persons. To save myself trouble, I have just printed some copies of the enclosed little piece, which I purpose to send hereafter in answer to such letters. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1486. TO HENRY LAURENS (L. C.)

Passy, March 12th, 1784

DEAR SIR: — I received your kind letter by Mr. Chollet with the Pamphlets and newspapers, and since, a paper of the 5th, which came under cover to Mr. Grand. I am much obliged to you for these Communications.

Your sentiments and mine respecting the continual Drafts on Europe coincide perfectly. I have just received a letter from Mr. Carmichael dated the 14th past, in which he says; "Bills from Congress come to hand from time to time, some of which Mr. M. has advised me of; the others I am at a loss what to do with; but having no Instructions to the contrary I cannot refuse accepting them. I should be glad to know your sentiments thereon." All I can say to him in answer is, that it will behove him to consider where he can find Funds for Payment, since there is not the smallest Probability that I shall be able to assist him from hence. Sure it must be some unavoidable necessity that induces so prudent a Man as Mr. Morris to take such Measures: and the several States must be much to blame to leave him under that necessity.

I heartily wish you success in your Endeavors to recover your £2,800 from the Treasury. I know too well the Dexterity of that Board (Dexterity is acquired by much Practice) in fighting off Payments, not to think you very lucky if you can obtain your Right by only mounting twice more their 70 steps.

The Commission for a Commercial Treaty, ordered to be prepared by the Vote of May last, is indeed not yet come to hand; but by their sending us repeatedly Copies of that

Vote; and nothing more, it looks as if they thought we might proceed, by virtue of it, to prepare a Plan of a Treaty. Having written expressly on the subject, we may expect soon to know their minds more perfectly.

I thank you much for your information of the proceedings of the West India People. It seems to me that we cannot be much hurt by any selfish Regulations the English may make respecting our Trade with their Islands. Those who at present wish to kick the Hedge-hog, will grow tired of that sport when they find their own Toes bleed.

I have just received a letter from the Secretary of Congress, Mr. Thomson, of which I inclose a Copy. The Term for exchanging the Ratifications was expired before it came to hand. Mr. Hartley having frequently written to me to know if the Ratification was arrived, I have communicated to him this Letter, that he might see the delay was occasioned only by unforeseen Accidents, and that we had reason to expect receiving it by the return of the Washington Packet. I do not imagine that any difficulty will be occasioned by this Circumstance; but perhaps it may not be amiss, if you are well enough, to see Mr. Hartley on the subject, and should any Agreement to extend the Term be necessary, you can enter into it as well as if we were all present.

I write this in great pain from the Gout in both Feet; but my young friend, your son, having informed me that he sets out for London to-morrow, I could not slip the opportunity, as perhaps it is the only safe one that may occur before your departure for America. I wish mine was as near. I think I have reason to complain, that I am so long without an answer from Congress to my request of Recall. I wish rather to die in my own Country than here; and though the upper part

of the Building appears yet tolerably firm, yet, being undermin'd by the Stone and Gout united, its Fall cannot be far distant.

You are so good as to offer me your friendly Services. You cannot do me one more acceptable at present, than that of forwarding my Dismission. In all other respects, as well as that, I shall ever look on your Friendship as an Honour to me; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P.S. *March 13th* Having had a tolerable night, I find myself something better this morning. In reading over my letter, I perceive an Omission of my thanks for your kind Assurances of never forsaking my Defence, should there be need. I apprehend that the violent Antipathy of a certain person to me may have produced some Calumnies, which, what you have seen and heard here may enable you easily to refute. You will thereby exceedingly oblige one, who has lived beyond all other Ambition, than that of dying with the fair Character he has long endeavoured to deserve. As to my Infallibility, which you do not undertake to maintain, I am too modest myself to claim it, that is, *in general*; tho' when we come to *particulars*, I, like other people, give it up with difficulty. Steele says, that the difference between the Church of Rome, and the Church of England on that point, is only this; that the one pretends to be *infallible*, and the other to be *never in the wrong*. In this latter Sense, we are most of us Church of England men, though few of us confess it, and express it so naturally and frankly, as a certain great Lady here, who said, "I don't know how it happens, but I meet with nobody, except myself, that is *always* in the right; *Il n'y a que moi qui a toujours raison.*"

My Grandson joins me in affectionate Respects to you and the young lady; with best wishes for your Health and Prosperity.

1487. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, March 19, 1784.

You will forget me quite, my dear old Friend, if I do not write to you now and then.

I still exist, and still enjoy some Pleasure in that Existence, tho' now in my 79th year. Yet I feel the Infirmities of Age come on so fast, and the Building to need so many Repairs, that in a little time the Owner will find it cheaper to pull it down and build a new one. I wish, however, to see you first, but I begin to doubt the Possibility. My Children join in Love to you and yours, with your affectionate Friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

1488. TO LA SABLIERE DE LA CONDAMINE²
(A. P. S.)

Passy, March 19, 1784

SIR,

I receiv'd the very obliging Letter you did me honour of writing to me the 8th Inst. with the epigram³ &c. for which please to accept my Thanks.

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

² A physician who wrote to Franklin from "Chateau de Colet à Steroman de Beauvoir, par St. Marcellin, en Dauphiné, le 8 Mars 1784" (A. P. S.). He was the author of "Memoires sur l'Inoculation de la Petite Vérole," Paris, 1768 — ED.

³ "Epigramme — sur les Balons aérostatiques dont tout le monde raffole aujourd'hui.

Charles, Pilatres, Montgolfier,
Vos balons aérostatiques,

You desire my Sentiments concerning the Cures perform'd by Comus & Mesmer. I think that in general, Maladies caus'd by Obstructions may be treated by Electricity with Advantage. As to the Animal Magnetism, so much talk'd of, I am totally unacquainted with it, and must doubt its Existence till I can see or feel some Effect of it. None of the Cures said to be perform'd by it, have fallen under my Observation; and there being so many Disorders which cure themselves and such a Disposition in Mankind to deceive themselves and one another on these Occasions; and living long having given me frequent Opportunities of seeing certain Remedies cry'd up as curing everything, and yet soon after totally laid aside as useless, I cannot but fear that the Expectation of great Advantage from the new Method of treating Diseases, will prove a Delusion. That Delusion may however in some cases be of use while it lasts. There are in every great rich City a Number of Persons who are never in health, because they are fond of Medicines and always taking them, whereby they derange the natural Functions, and hurt their Constitutions. If these People can be persuaded to forbear

J'en conviens, sont fort magnifiques;
 Mais, on ne sçauroit s'y fier. —
 — Laissons à chacun son domaine;
 Dieu fit les airs pour les oiseaux,
 Aux poissons il donna les eaux,
 Et la terre à l'espèce humaine, —
 Cultivons-la mes chers amis, —
 Traivillons, — c'est la mon avis;
 Nous en ferons mieux nos affaires;
 Tandisque est fous imprudens,
 Livrés à leurs doctes chimères,
 Iront, voyageurs téméraires,
 Prendre la lune avec les dents."

This *j'en eu d'esprit* was sent by its author to the General Journal of France, but it was rejected. — ED.

their Drugs in Expectation of being cured by only the Physician's Finger or an Iron Rod pointing at them, they may possibly find good Effects tho' they mistake the Cause. I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1489. TO M. MAZUE ¹ (A. P. S.)

Passy, March 19, 1784

SIR

I received your Favour of the 27th past, proposing the Cultivation of the Vine in America. Our people conceive that it is yet too early to put such a project in Execution. Labour is too dear there, and the Culture of Wheat more profitable & certain; in Exchange for which either directly or indirectly, we can procure the Wines of Europe.

I cannot therefore give you any Hopes of Success in such an Enterprise; for tho' proper Land & Climate might be found, the Wines could not be produc'd so cheap as they are imported. I have the honour to be Sir

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1490. AN ECONOMICAL PROJECT ²

TO THE AUTHORS OF THE JOURNAL OF PARIS.

MESSIEURS,

YOU often entertain us with accounts of new discoveries. Permit me to communicate to the public, through your paper,

¹ In answer to a letter from Marseilles, dated February 27, 1784 (A. P. S.). — ED.

² No attempt has hitherto been made to assign a date to this bagatelle. Quinquet invented the lamp that bears his name early in 1784. Evidently

one that has lately been made by myself, and which I conceive may be of great utility.

I was the other evening in a grand company, where the new lamp of Messrs. Quinquet and Lange was introduced, and much admired for its splendour; but a general inquiry was made, whether the oil it consumed was not in proportion to the light it afforded, in which case there would be no saving in the use of it. No one present could satisfy us in that point, which all agreed ought to be known, it being a very desirable thing to lessen, if possible, the expense of lighting our apartments, when every other article of family expense was so much augmented.

I was pleased to see this general concern for economy, for I love economy exceedingly.

I went home, and to bed, three or four hours after midnight, with my head full of the subject. An accidental sudden noise waked me about six in the morning, when I was surprised to find my room filled with light; and I imagined at first, that a number of those lamps had been brought into it; but, rubbing my eyes, I perceived the light came in at the windows. I got up and looked out to see what might be the occasion of it, when I saw the sun just rising above the horizon, from whence he poured his rays plentifully into my chamber, my domestic having negligently omitted, the preceding evening, to close the shutters.

I looked at my watch, which goes very well, and found that it was but six o'clock; and still thinking it something extraordinary that the sun should rise so early, I looked into the

this article was written while that lamp was still exciting curiosity by its novelty. From page 186 it appears that the exact day of the composition was March 20, 1784. — ED.

almanac, where I found it to be the hour given for his rising on that day. I looked forward, too, and found he was to rise still earlier every day till towards the end of June; and that at no time in the year he retarded his rising so long as till eight o'clock. Your readers, who with me have never seen any signs of sunshine before noon, and seldom regard the astronomical part of the almanac, will be as much astonished as I was, when they hear of his rising so early; and especially when I assure them, *that he gives light as soon as he rises*. I am convinced of this. I am certain of my fact. One cannot be more certain of any fact. I saw it with my own eyes. And, having repeated this observation the three following mornings, I found always precisely the same result.

Yet it so happens, that when I speak of this discovery to others, I can easily perceive by their countenances, though they forbear expressing it in words, that they do not quite believe me. One, indeed, who is a learned natural philosopher, has assured me that I must certainly be mistaken as to the circumstance of the light coming into my room; for it being well known, as he says, that there could be no light abroad at that hour, it follows that none could enter from without; and that of consequence, my windows being accidentally left open, instead of letting in the light, had only served to let out the darkness; and he used many ingenious arguments to show me how I might, by that means, have been deceived. I owned that he puzzled me a little, but he did not satisfy me; and the subsequent observations I made, as above mentioned, confirmed me in my first opinion.

This event has given rise in my mind to several serious and important reflections. I considered that, if I had not

been awakened so early in the morning, I should have slept six hours longer by the light of the sun, and in exchange have lived six hours the following night by candle-light; and, the latter being a much more expensive light than the former, my love of economy induced me to muster up what little arithmetic I was master of, and to make some calculations, which I shall give you, after observing that utility is, in my opinion the test of value in matters of invention, and that a discovery which can be applied to no use, or is not good for something, is good for nothing.

I took for the basis of my calculation the supposition that there are one hundred thousand families in Paris, and that these families consume in the night half a pound of bougies, or candles, per hour. I think this is a moderate allowance, taking one family with another; for though I believe some consume less, I know that many consume a great deal more. Then estimating seven hours per day as the medium quantity between the time of the sun's rising and ours, he rising during the six following months from six to eight hours before noon, and there being seven hours of course per night in which we burn candles, the account will stand thus;—

In the six months between the 20th of March and the 20th of September, there are

Nights	183
Hours of each night in which we burn candles	7
Multiplication gives for the total number of	—
hours	1,281

These 1,281 hours multiplied by 100,000, the number of inhabitants, give 128,100,000
 One hundred twenty-eight millions and one
 hundred thousand hours, spent at Paris by

candle-light, which, at half a pound of wax and tallow per hour, gives the weight of . . . 64,050,000
 Sixty-four millions and fifty thousand of pounds, which, estimating the whole at the medium price of thirty sols the pound, makes the sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres tournois 96,075,000

An immense sum! that the city of Paris might save every year, by the economy of using sunshine instead of candles.

If it should be said, that people are apt to be obstinately attached to old customs, and that it will be difficult to induce them to rise before noon, consequently my discovery can be of little use; I answer, *Nil desperandum*. I believe all who have common sense, as soon as they have learnt from this paper that it is daylight when the sun rises, will contrive to rise with him; and, to compel the rest, I would propose the following regulations;

First. Let a tax be laid of a louis per window, on every window that is provided with shutters to keep out the light of the sun.

Second. Let the same salutary operation of police be made use of, to prevent our burning candles, that inclined us last winter to be more economical in burning wood; that is, let guards be placed in the shops of the wax and tallow chandlers, and no family be permitted to be supplied with more than one pound of candles per week.

Third. Let guards also be posted to stop all the coaches, &c. that would pass the streets after sun-set, except those of physicians, surgeons, and midwives.

Fourth. Every morning, as soon as the sun rises, let all the bells in every church be set ringing; and if that is not

sufficient, let cannon be fired in every street, to wake the sluggards effectually, and make them open their eyes to see their true interest.

All the difficulty will be in the first two or three days; after which the reformation will be as natural and easy as the present irregularity; for, *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*. Oblige a man to rise at four in the morning, and it is more than probable he will go willingly to bed at eight in the evening; and, having had eight hours sleep, he will rise more willingly at four in the morning following. But this sum of ninety-six millions and seventy-five thousand livres is not the whole of what may be saved by my economical project. You may observe, that I have calculated upon only one half of the year, and much may be saved in the other, though the days are shorter. Besides, the immense stock of wax and tallow left unconsumed during the summer, will probably make candles much cheaper for the ensuing winter, and continue them cheaper as long as the proposed reformation shall be supported.

For the great benefit of this discovery, thus freely communicated and bestowed by me on the public, I demand neither place, pension, exclusive privilege, nor any other reward whatever. I expect only to have the honour of it. And yet I know there are little, envious minds, who will, as usual, deny me this, and say, that my invention was known to the ancients, and perhaps they may bring passages out of the old books in proof of it. I will not dispute with these people, that the ancients knew not the sun would rise at certain hours; they possibly had, as we have, almanacs that predicted it; but it does not follow thence, that they knew *he gave light as soon as he rose*. This is what I claim as my dis-

covery. If the ancients knew it, it might have been long since forgotten; for it certainly was unknown to the moderns, at least to the Parisians, which to prove, I need use but one plain simple argument. They are as well instructed, judicious, and prudent a people as exist anywhere in the world, all professing, like myself, to be lovers of economy; and, from the many heavy taxes required from them by the necessities of the state, have surely an abundant reason to be economical. I say it is impossible that so sensible a people, under such circumstances, should have lived so long by the smoky, unwholesome, and enormously expensive light of candles, if they had really known, that they might have had as much pure light of the sun for nothing. I am, &c.

A SUBSCRIBER.

1491. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (B. M.)

Passy, March 25, 1784

SIR

I return herewith the Papers you communicated to me yesterday. I perceive by the Extract from M. de Sartine's Letter¹ that it was his Intention all the Charges which had accru'd upon the *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* should be deducted from the Prize money payable to the Captors, particularly the Expence of Victualling the Seamen and Prisoners; and that the Liquidation of those Charges should be referr'd to me. This Liquidation however never was referr'd to me; and if it had, I should have been cautious of acting in it, having receiv'd no Power from the Captors, either French or Americans, authorising me to decide upon

¹ Dated May 29, 1780. — ED.

anything respecting their Interests. And I certainly should not have agreed to charge the American Captors with any Part of the Expence of maintaining the 600 Prisoners in Holland till they could be exchanged, when none of them were exchanged for Americans in England, as was your Intention, & as we both had been made to expect.

With great Esteem, I have the honour to be

Sir, Your most obedient

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN

1492. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy March 31, 1784

SIR

I have the honour of acquainting your Excellency, that our express from Congress is at last arrived, with their Ratification of the Definitive Treaty. Inclosed I send Copies of the President's Letter, the Recommendatory Resolution, and the Proclamation, together with three Letters for yourself. We have written to M^r Hartley that we are now ready to make the Exchange.

With great Respect, I am, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1493. TO CHARLES THOMSON ¹

Passy, March 31, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I write this line by the English packet, just to inform you, that Colonel Harmar arrived here last Monday evening with

¹ First printed by Sparks, Vol. X, p. 439. — ED.

the ratification, and that Mr. Jay and myself (Messrs. Adams and Laurens being absent) have written to Mr. Hartley at London, that we are ready to exchange with him. I have not heard that the delay is likely to occasion any difficulty. I had before communicated to him your letter of the 5th of January, which gave the reason of it. With great esteem,
I am
B. FRANKLIN.

1494. TO MADAME BRILLON (A. P. S.)

Passy March 31, '84.

Voici, ma très cher Amie, une de mes Plaisanteries serieuses, ou sourdes, que je vous envoie, esperant qu'elle pourra peutetre vous amuser un peu. Au quel cas, vous me recompenserez en me donnant je n'ose dire un Baiser, car les votres sont trop precieux, et vous en êtes trop chiche; mais vous me j'ouerez un Noel et l'excellent Marche des Insurgents.

B. F.

1495. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

Passy, April 16th, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letters by Colonel Harmar, and Lieut-Colonel Frank, with the Dispatches, in good order; triplicates of which are since come to hand. You will see by our letter to the President, that we daily expect Mr. Hartley from London, with the British Ratification to exchange with us. There was no difficulty occasioned by the lapse of the term.

¹ From the original in the New York Historical Society. — ED.

I send you herewith four packets of newspapers, by which you will be informed of the confusions that have reigned all winter in England, and the probability of their being finish'd by the choice of a new Parliament, in which the present Ministry will have a great majority. The n. papers are directed for the Presid^t. You are good in excusing the trouble I have given you with so many little affairs and enquiries, and enabling me to give some answer to the persons who make them. I am pestered continually with such matters.

I am happy in learning from you, that disposition begins to prevail in the States, to comply with the requisitions of Congress, and Funds for the regular payment of the Interest, and discharge of the Principal of the Debts contracted by the War. Punctuality and exact justice will contribute more to our reputation, and, of course, to our strength, than people generally imagine. Without those virtues, we shall find it difficult in case of another war to obtain either friends or money; and a reliance on that may encourage and hasten another attack upon us. Gratitude to our former benefactors is another point we should seize every opportunity of demonstrating. I place, with you, much confidence in the good sense of our countrymen; and thence I hope, that the endeavours of some persons on both sides the water, to sow jealousies and suspicions, and create misunderstandings between France and us, will be ineffectual.

A Commission from Congress for a Commercial Treaty with Britain has long been expected. If the intention of sending such a Commission is not changed, I wish it may arrive before Mr. Laurens leaves us, who has a more perfect knowledge of the subject than any of us, and might be greatly useful. A Minister from Denmark has been waiting in Paris

all winter for the result of Congress on the proposed Treaty, a plan of which was long sent, as also one for a Treaty with Portugal. I hope by the return of the *Washington* packet, we may receive some directions respecting them. I am, with sincere and great esteem, my Dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1496. TO JOHN WALTER¹ (L. C.)

Passy, April 17, 1784.

SIR,

I have received a Book, for which I understand I am obliged to you, the "Introduction to Logography." I have read it

¹ John Walter (1739-1812), founder of *The Times*, succeeded to his father's business as a coal merchant in the city of London. He abandoned it for that of an underwriter, failed in consequence of the American war, and announced his bankruptcy in 1782. Two years later he purchased the premises in Printing House Square, the site of the Blackfriars Theatre, which had been unoccupied since the removal of Eyre and Strahan in 1770, where he began business as a printer, using Johnson's invention of "logotypes" or founts composed of complete words, instead of separate letters. Some forty books were printed by the logographic process and sold by John Walter. He also started a newspaper called *The Daily Universal Register*, of which the first number, "printed logographically," was issued January 1, 1785. The nine-hundred-and-fortieth number (January 1, 1788) was entitled *The Times*, or *Daily Universal Register*, and was also "printed logographically." A letter from John Walter to Lord Kenyon, July 6, 1799 (Hist. Mss. Comm. 14th Report App. Pt. IV, p. 551), contains the following interesting personal narrative. "Among many other projects which offered themselves to my view was a plan to print logographically. I sat down closely to digest it, and formed a fount which reduced the English language from ninety thousand words which were usually used in printing to about fifteen hundred. . . . By this means I was enabled to print much faster than by taking up single letters. . . . I was advised to get a number of nobility and men of letters . . . to patronise the plan, to which his Majesty was to have been the patron. But happening unfortunately as it turned out, to correspond with Dr. Franklin, then ambassa-

with Attention, and, as far as I understand it, am much pleas'd with it. I do not perfectly comprehend the Arrangement of his Cases; but the Reduction of the Number of Pieces by the Roots of Words, and their different Terminations, is extreamly ingenious; and I like much the Idea of cementing the Letters, instead of casting Words or Syllables, which I formerly attempted, and succeeded in having invented a Mould, and Method by which I could in a few minutes, form a Matrice, and adjust it, of any Word in any Fount at pleasure, and proceed to cast from it.

I send enclosed a specimen of some of my Terminations, and would willingly instruct Mr. Johnson ¹ in the Method if he desired it; but he has a better. He mentions some Improvements of Printing that have been proposed, but takes no Notice of one published here at Paris, in 1776; so I suppose he has neither seen nor heard of it. It is in a Quarto Pamphlet, entitled, "*Nouveau Système Typographique, ou Moyen de diminuer, de Moitié, dans toutes les Imprimeries de l'Europe, le Travail et les Frais de Composition, de Correction, et de Distribution, découvert en 1774, par Madame de * * *.*"² Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora. *A Paris, de l'Imprimerie Royale, MDCCLXXVI.*" It is dedicated

dor at Paris, whose opinion I wished for, his name was among my list of subscribers, and when it was given, among near two hundred more, to the King's librarian and a fount of the cemented words had been sent there [Buckingham Palace] for his Majesty's inspection and acceptance, I found an increasing coolness in the librarian, and afterwards a note from him, saying the King had viewed it with pleasure, but, there being no room in Buckingham House, he desired I would send some person to take it away. Thus ended royal patronage." See J. R. Thursfield in "Dict. Nat. Biog." — ED.

¹ Henry Johnson, the inventor, from whom John Walter purchased the patent rights. — ED.

² Madame de St. Paul. — ED.

to the King, who was at the Expence of the Experiments. Two Commissaries were named to examine and render an Account of them; they were M. Desmarests, of the Academy of Sciences, and M. Barbou,⁴ an eminent Printer. Their Report concludes thus; “Nous nous contenterons de dire ici, que M. de St. Paul a rempli les engagements qu’il avoit contractés avec le Gouvernement; que ses expériences projetées ont été conduites avec beaucoup de méthode et d’intelligence de sa part; et que par des calculs longs et pénibles, qui sont le fruit d’un grand nombre de combinaisons raisonnées, il en a déduit plusieurs résultats qui méritent d’être proposés aux artistes, et qui nous paroissent propres à éclairer la pratique de l’imprimerie actuelle, et à en abrégér certainement les procédées. . . . Son projet ne peut que gagner aux contradictions qu’il essuiera sans doute, de la part des gens de l’art. A Paris, le 8 Janvier, 1776.” The pamphlet consists of 66 Pages, containing a Number of Tables of Words and Parts of Words, Explanations of those Tables, Calculations, answers to Objections, &c. I will endeavour to get one to send you if you desire it; mine is bound up with others in a Volume.

It was after seeing this Piece, that I cast the Syllables I send you a Sample of. I have not heard, that any of the Printers here make at present the least use of the Invention of Madame de * * *. You will observe, that it pretended only to lessen the Work by one half; Mr. Johnson’s Method lessens it three fourths. I should be glad to know with what the Letters are cemented. I think cementing better than

¹ Nicolas Desmarest (1725–1805), a student of French industries; and Joseph-Gérard Barbou (1715–1813), one of a notable family of printers, and the second of the name to pursue the business in Paris. — ED.

casting them together, because if one Letter happens to be battered, it may be taken away and another cemented in its Place. I received no Letter with the Pamphlet. I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1497. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹ (P. C.)

Passy April 17 1784

DEAR SIR,

The Commissioners have received the Letter you did them the honour of writing to them the 9th Instant, and are glad to learn that they may expect the Pleasure of seeing you soon again at Paris. It is a particular Satisfaction to me, as it will give me an opportunity of communicating an Idea to you in Conversation which may tend to promote your excellent views of "effecting a cordial & conciliatory Intercourse between our Countries" but which I cannot so well explain at present by writing.

The Bearer, Col. Harmar,² is an American of good Character, who visits England in Curiosity to see the Country and People he has been fighting against. I wish to give him a good Opinion of them by the Sample he may be acquainted with, and therefore beg leave to recommend him to your Acquaintance & Civilities.

With great and inalterable Esteem & Affection

I am ever my dear Friend

Yours most sincerely

B. FRANKLIN

¹ From a copy in the collection of Mrs. L. Z. Leiter. — Ed.

² Josiah Harmar (1753-1813) entered the Continental army in the 1st Pennsylvanian regiment and served throughout the war. He took the ratification of the definitive treaty to France in 1784. — Ed.

1498. TO BENJAMIN WEBB ¹ (L. C.)Passy, April 22^d, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received yours of the 15th Instant, and the Memorial it inclosed.² The account they give of your situation grieves me. I send you herewith a Bill for Ten Louis d'ors. I do not pretend to *give* such a Sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your Country with a good Character, you cannot fail of getting into some Business, that will in time enable you to pay all your Debts. In that Case, when you meet with another honest Man in similar Distress, you must pay me by lending this Sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the Debt by a like operation, when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may thus go thro' many hands, before it meets with a Knave that will stop its Progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*. With best wishes for the success of your Memorial, and your future prosperity, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ The Duke of Sussex wrote in the margin of his copy of Franklin's works (now in B. M.), "the idea of this loan is most beautiful and bespeaks a goodness of heart for which one must love the man." — ED.

² This letter written at Geneva is in A. P. S. The writer had been declared a bankrupt in England, fell under suspicion of having secreted property, and fled to the continent. He now wished to return to England and reëmbark in business. — ED.

1499. TO HENRY LAURENS (L. C.)

Passy, April 29, 1784

DEAR SIR:—I received your Favour by Mr. Bourdieu and yesterday another of the 18th, per Mr. Hartley, who also gave me the Gazette with the Proclamation. I am with you very little uneasy about that, or any other Measures the Ministers may think proper to take with respect to the Commerce with us. We shall do very well. They have long lost Sight of their true Interest, and are now wandring blindfold in search of it, without being able to find it; but they may *feel* what they cannot at present *see*; and all as you say will come right at last.

Mr. Hartley seems to have some Expectation of receiving Instructions to negociate a Commercial Treaty. He thinks he could hardly be sent here merely to exchange the Rati-fications. I have not much dependance on this. Yet as we are authoriz'd to receive Overtures from any European Power, and to plan Treaties to be sent to Congress for Approbation, and I am not yet dismiss'd, I shall much regret your Absence if such a Treaty should be brought upon the Tapis: for Mr. Jay will probably be gone, and I shall be left alone, or with Mr. A., and I can have no favourable Opinion of what may be the Offspring of a Coalition between my ignorance and his Positiveness. It would help much if we could have from you a Sketch of the Outlines, and leading Features of the Treaty, in case your propos'd Embarkation for America should take Place before Mr. Hartley makes his Overtures.

There being but nine States present at the Ratification, was owing only to the extreme Inclemency of the Season, which

obstructed Travelling. There was in Congress one Member from each of three more States; and all were unanimous tho' the Votes of those three could not be reckon'd. It is therefore without Foundation that those Gentlemen flatter themselves from that Circumstance with a Defection of four States from the Union, and hence a Probability of a Return of the whole to the Dominion of Britain. What Folly!

My grandson joins in respectful Compliments and best Wishes with, Dear Sir, your most obedient humble Servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

1500. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN ¹

Passy, April 29, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letters of the 16th and 20th instant. I thank you for your philosophical news. We have none here. I see your philosophers are in the way of finding out at last what fire is. I have long been of opinion, that it exists everywhere in the state of a subtile fluid; that too much of that fluid in our flesh gives us the sensation we call heat; too little, cold; its vibrations, light. That all solid or fluid substances, which are inflammable, have been composed of it; their dissolution in returning to their original fluid state, we call fire. This subtile fluid is attracted by plants and animals in their growth, and consolidated; is attracted by other substances, thermometers, &c. variously; has a particular affinity with water, and will quit many other bodies to attach itself to water, and go off with it in evaporation. Adieu.

Yours, most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Printed from Sparks, Vol. VI, p. 454. — ED.

1501. A LETTER FROM CHINA ¹

Lisbon, May 5, 1784.

SIR,

AGREEABLE to your desire, I have examined the sailor more particularly, and shall now give you the circumstances of his story, with all the observations he made in the country, concerning which you are so curious. He appears a more intelligent fellow than seamen in general. He says that he belonged to the *Resolution*, an English ship, one of those that made the last voyage with Captain Cook. That on their return, being at Macao, he and a comrade of his were overpersuaded by a Portuguese captain, who spoke English and Chinese, to desert, in order to go with him in a brigantine to the northwestern coast of America, to purchase sea-beaver skins from the savages, by which they hoped to make fortunes. That accordingly they took a boat belonging to the ship, got ashore in the night, turned the boat adrift, and were hid by the Portuguese captain till the *Resolution* was gone. That this was in January, 1780, and that in April following they sailed from Macao, intending to go first to a place he calls Nooky-Bay, in latitude 50. That they had twenty-five men, with eight guns and small arms for their defence, and a quantity of iron ware, cutlery, with European and Chinese toys, for trade.

That about the beginning of May, in a dark night, the captain being sick in his cabin, they were surprised and suddenly boarded by two boats full of armed men, to the number of forty, who took possession of the brig, no resistance being

¹ From *The Repository*, May, 1788. — ED.

made. That these strangers altered her course, and stood, as he saw by the compass, to the northwest; that the next day the captain understood by a Chinese among them, that they were Curry¹ Ladrones, or pirates; that they had been cruising on the coast of China, and had lost their vessel on a reef the night before; and it was explained to the captain, that if he and his people would work the ship, and fight upon occasion, they should be well used, and have a share of plunder, or otherwise be thrown overboard. That all consented, and three days after they saw land, and coasted it northward; that they took two Chinese junks, who were sent away steering northeast, eight men being put into each, and some of the Chinese taken out. That the brig went on to the northward for four days after, without taking any thing; but running too near the coast in chase of another Chinese, they stuck fast on a shoal in a falling tide; that they hoped to get off by the night flood, but were mistaken, and the next morning were surrounded by a great many armed boats and vessels, which the chased vessel, which got in, had probably occasioned to come out against them. That at first they beat off those vessels, but, reinforcements coming, they saw it impossible to escape, and submitted, and were all brought on shore and committed to prison.

That a few days after they were taken out and examined, and, the Portuguese captain making it appear that he and his people were prisoners to the Ladrones, they were recommitted, and the Ladrones all beheaded. That the brig, being got off, was, after some time, as he understood, by an order from court, restored to the Portuguese captain, who went away in her with all his people, except this relator and a Portuguese

¹ Perhaps *Corea*. — S.

lad, who, being both ill of the flux, and likely to die, were left behind in prison. What became of the brig afterwards, he never heard. That they were well attended in their sickness, and soon recovered, but were not set at liberty. That the prison was a very clean, airy place, consisting of several courts and ranges of building, the whole securely walled and guarded, and governed with great order. That every body was obliged to work; but his work was not hard, it was weaving rushes upon hoops for the bottom of chairs, and they had some small pay for them, which, added to the prison allowance of rice and *chong*, was more than a sufficiency; and he thinks there are no such comfortable prisons in England, at least among those he had been acquainted with. That he applied himself to learn the Chinese language, and succeeded so far at last as to understand and make himself understood in common matters. That some of the most orderly prisoners were allowed to assist the neighbouring country people in time of harvest, under the care of overseers. That he and his companion were from time to time made to expect that orders would come from court for their release; but he supposes they were quite forgotten. They had written frequently to the Popish missionaries at Peking, requesting their solicitations, but received no answer; and perhaps the prison-keeper, who had a profit on their labour, never sent their letters.

That after more than a year's confinement, being in the country at a harvest, he accidentally cut his foot very badly, and was left behind at a farmer's house to be cured; the farmer undertaking to return him to prison when recovered. That he got into favour in the family; that he taught the farmer's wife to make soap, which he understood, it being

his father's trade. That he had himself been apprentice to a shoemaker before he took to the sea ; and, finding some leather in the house, he made himself, with such tools as he could get or make, a large shoe for his lame foot. That the farmer admired the shoe much above the Chinese shoes, and requested a pair for himself. That he accordingly made shoes for the farmer, his wife, two sons, and a daughter. That he was obliged first to make the lasts for all of them ; and that it is not true that the feet of Chinese women are less than those of English women. That, these shoes being admired, many inhabitants of the neighbouring village desired to have of them ; so he was kept constantly at work, the farmer finding the leather, selling the shoes, and allowing him some share of the profit, by which he got about an ounce of silver per week, all money being weighed there. That the Chinese tan their leather with oaken chips, saw-dust, and shavings, which are saved by the carpenters for the farmers, who boil them, and steep their hides in the warm liquor, so that it is sooner fit for use. That the farmer's wife began to get money by selling soap, and they proposed to obtain his liberty, and keep him in the family, by giving him their daughter, when a little older, for a wife, with a piece of land ; and he believes they did prevail with the jailor, by presents, to connive at his stay, on pretence of his lameness.

He liked their way of living, except their sometimes eating dog's flesh. Their pork was excellent ; the rice, dressed various ways, all very good, and the *chong* he grew fond of, and learnt to make it. They put kidney beans in soak for twenty-four hours, then grind them in a hand-mill, pouring in water from time to time to wash the meal from between the stones, which falls into a tub covered with a coarse cloth that

lets the meal and water pass through, retaining only the skins of the beans; that a very small quantity of alum, or some sort of salt, put into it, makes the meal settle to the bottom, when they pour off the water. That it is eaten various ways, by all sorts of people, with milk, with meat, as thickening in broth, &c. That they used also to put a little alum in their river water when foul, to clear it for use, and by that means made it as clear as rock water, the dirt all settling. Their house was near a great river, but he does not remember its name. That he lived in this family about a year, but did not get the daughter, her grandfather refusing his consent to her marriage with a stranger.

That they have a sort of religion, with priests and churches, but do not keep Sunday, nor go to church, being very heathenish. That in every house there is a little idol, to which they give thanks, make presents, and show respect in harvest time, but very little at other times; and, inquiring of his master why they did not go to church to pray, as we do in Europe, he was answered, they paid the priests to pray for them, that they might stay at home and mind their business; and that it would be a folly to pay others for praying, and then go and do the praying themselves; and that the more work they did while the priests prayed, the better able they were to pay them well for praying.

That they have horses, but not many; the breed small, but strong; kept chiefly for war, and not used in labour, nor to draw carriages. That oxen are used; but the chief of their labour is done by men, not only in the fields, but on the roads, travellers being carried from town to town in bamboo chairs, by hired chairmen, throughout the country; and goods also, either hanging on poles between two, and sometimes four men,

or in wheel-barrows; they having no coaches, carts, or wag-gons, and the roads being paved with flat stones.

They say that their great father (so they call the emperor) forbids the keeping of horses, because he had rather have his country filled with his children than with brutes; and one horse requires as much ground to produce him food, as would feed six men; yet some great people obtain leave to keep one horse for pleasure. That the master, having a farm left to him by a deceased relation, in a distant part of the country, sold the land he lived on, and went with the whole family to take possession, and live on the other. That they embarked in one of the boats that carry sea fish into the heart of the empire, which are kept fresh even in hot weather, by being packed in great hampers with layers of ice and straw, and repacked every two or three days with fresh ice, taken at ice-houses on the way. That they had been ten days on their voyage, when they arrived at the new farm, going up always against the stream. That the owner of the boat, finding him handy and strong in rowing and working her, and one of the hands falling sick, persuaded him to go fifteen days farther, promising him great pay, and to bring him back to the family. But that, having unloaded the fish, the Chinese went off with his boat in the night, leaving him behind, without paying him. That there is a great deal of cheating in China, and no remedy. That stealing, robbing, and house-breaking are punished severely; but cheating is free there in every thing, as cheating in horses is among our gentlemen in England.

That, meeting at that place with a boat bound towards Canton in a canal, he thought it might be a means of escaping out of that country, if he went in her; so he shipped himself to work for his passage, though it was with regret he

left for ever the kind family he had so long lived with. That after twenty-five days' voyage on the canal, the boat stopping at a little town, he went ashore, and walked about to look at it, and buy some tobacco; and in returning he was stopped, taken up, examined, and sent away, under a guard, across the country to a mandarin, distant two days' journey. That here he found the lingo somewhat different, and could not so well make himself understood; that he was kept a month in prison before the mandarin had leisure to examine him. That, having given a true account of himself, as well as he could, the mandarin set him at liberty, but advised him to wait the departure of some persons for Canton, with whom he proposed to send him as a shipwrecked stranger, at the emperor's expense. That in the mean time he worked in the mandarin's garden, and conversed with the common people. He does not recollect the name of the province, but says it was one of the tea countries; and that, besides the true tea, they made a vast deal of counterfeit tea, which they packed up in boxes, some mixed with good tea, but mostly unmixed, and sent it away to different sea-ports for the supply of foreign countries. That he observed they made ordinary tea of the leaves of sweet potatoes, which they cut into form by stamps, and had the art of giving such colour and taste as they judged proper. When he spoke of this practice as a fraud, they said there was no harm in it, for strangers liked the false tea as well, or better, than the true; and that it was impossible to load with true tea all the ships that came for it; China could not furnish such a quantity; and, if the demand went on increasing as it had done some years past, all the leaves of all the trees in the country would not be sufficient to answer it. This tea was sold cheap, as he understood twenty catty

of it (a catty is near our pound) for about an ounce of silver. They did not drink it themselves, but said it was not unwholesome, if drunk moderately.

That after some time he set out in the train of seven merchants for Canton, with a passport from the mandarin, going partly by land, but chiefly by water in canals. That they stopt a week in a part of the country where a great deal of China ware is made; that many farmers had little furnaces in some out-house, where they worked at leisure times, and made, some nothing but tea-cups, others nothing but saucers, &c., which they sold to country shopkeepers, who collected quantities for the merchants. The ware is there very cheap. He could have bought a dozen pretty cups and saucers for as much silver as is in an English half-crown.

He says it is not true, that they have large wheel carriages in China, driven by the wind; at least he never saw or heard of any such; but that the wheelbarrow porters indeed, when passing some great open countries, do sometimes, if the wind is fair, spread a thin cotton sail, supported by a light bamboo mast, which they stick up on their wheelbarrows, and it helps them along. That he once saw a fleet of near three hundred sail of those wheelbarrows, each with a double wheel. That, when he arrived at Canton, he did not make himself known to the English there, but got down as soon as he could to Macao, hoping to meet with his Portuguese captain; but he had never returned. That he worked there in rigging of vessels, till he had an opportunity of coming home to Europe; and, hearing on his arrival here, from an old comrade in the packet, that his sweetheart is married, and that the *Resolution* and *Endeavour* got home, he shall decline going to England yet a while, fearing he may be punished for carrying off the

boat; therefore he has shipped himself, as I wrote you before, on a voyage to America. He was between three and four years in China. This is the substance of what I got from him, and nearly as he related it. He gave me the names of some places, but I found them hard to remember, and cannot recollect them.

1502. TO SAMUEL MATHER¹ (L. C.)

Passy, May 12, 1784.

REV^d SIR,

I received your kind letter, with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet, if they make a deep impression on one active mind in a hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which, though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book, entitled "*Essays to do Good*," which I think was written by your father.² It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out; but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

¹ Samuel Mather was colleague pastor of the same church to which his father and grandfather had ministered. He died June 27, 1785.—ED.

² Cotton Mather.—ED.

You mention your being in your 78th year; I am in my 79th; we are grown old together. It is now more than 60 years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "*Stoop, stoop!*" I did not understand him, till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, "*You are young, and have the world before you; STOOP as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.*" This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me; and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see again my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723; I visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773 I was in England; in 1775 I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy.¹ I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismissal from this employment here; and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes however attend my dear country. *Esto perpetua.*

¹ In October, 1775, he went to the camp at Cambridge, as one of a committee from Congress to consult with General Washington respecting the affairs of the army then besieging Boston. — S.

It is now blest with an excellent constitution; may it last for ever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes, and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France would infallibly bring the English again upon our backs; and yet we have some wild heads among our countrymen, who are endeavouring to weaken that connexion! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements; our credit by fulfilling our contracts; and friends by gratitude and kindness; for we know not how soon we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1503. TO THOMAS MIFFLIN (L. C.)

Passy, May 12, 1784.

SIR,

In my last I acquainted your Excellency, that Mr. Hartley was soon expected here to exchange Ratifications of the definitive Treaty. He is now arriv'd, and proposes to make the Exchange this Afternoon. I shall then be enabled to send a Copy. Enclosed is the new British Proclamation respecting our Trade with their Colonies. It is said to be only a temporary Provision, till Parliament can assemble and make some proper regulating Law, or till a commercial Treaty shall be framed and agreed to. Mr. Hartley expects Instructions

for planning with us such a Treaty. The Ministry are suppos'd to have been too busy with the new Elections, when he left London, to think of those Matters.

This Court has not compleated its intended new System for the Trade of their Colonies, so that I cannot yet give a certain Account of the Advantages, that will in fine be allow'd us. At present it is said we are to have two Free Ports, Tobago and the Mole, and that we may carry Lumber and all sorts of Provisions to the rest, except Flour, which is reserv'd in favour of Bordeaux, and that we shall be permitted to export Coffee, Rum, Mollasses, and some Sugar, for our own Consumption.

We have had under Consideration a commercial Treaty propos'd to us by the King of Prussia, and have sent it back with our Remarks to Mr. Adams, who will, I suppose, transmit it immediately to Congress. Those plann'd with Denmark and Portugal wait its Determination.

Be pleased to present my dutiful Respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere and great Esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1504. TO HENRY LAURENS (L. C.)

Passy, May 13, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry for the numerous Disappointments you have lately met with. The World, it's true, is full of Disappointments, but they are not equally divided, and you have had more than your Share.

The Ratifications of the definitive Treaty are now exchange'd; but Mr. Hartley waits for Instructions respecting

a Treaty of Commerce, which, from what you observe, may probably never arrive. I shall, however, be glad to receive what you are so good as to promise me, your Thoughts on the Subject of such a Treaty.

You have been so kind as to offer me your friendly services in America. You will oblige me greatly in forwarding my Dismission from this employment, for I long much to be at home; and if you should think my Grandson qualified to serve the States as Secretary to my Successor, or *Chargé d'Affaires*, till a Successor arrives, I shall thank you for recommending him. His Knowledge of this Court, and acquaintance with the Language, and the Esteem the Minister has for him, are Circumstances in his favor; his long Experience in the Business here is another, he having served an Apprenticeship to it for more than seven Years. His Intelligence, Discretion, and Address, you can judge better of than myself, who may be partial. His Fidelity and Exactitude in performing his Duty, I can answer for.

My best Wishes attend you, your very valuable Son, and amiable Daughter. God bless you all, and give you a good Voyage, and a happy Meeting with your Friends, with long Life, Health, and Prosperity, is the sincere Prayer of your affectionate humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1505. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

DEAR SIR,

Passy, May 13, 1784.

Yesterday evening Mr. Hartley met with Mr. Jay and myself when the ratifications of the Definitive Treaty were exchanged. I send a copy of the English Ratification to the President.

¹ From the original in the New York Historical Society. — ED.

Thus the great and hazardous enterprize we have been engaged in is, God be praised, happily compleated; an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of Peace, will improve, will restore and encrease our strength; but our future safety will depend on our union and our virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages, to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world, that we are a Nation to be depended on for fidelity in Treaties; if we appear negligent in paying our Debts, and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us; our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success. Let us therefore beware of being lulled into a dangerous security; and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury; of being weakened by internal contentions and divisions; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honorably those of the public; of neglect in military exercises and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munitions of war, to be ready on occasion; for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies, and diffidence to friends; and the expenses required to prevent a war are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.

I am long kept in suspense without being able to learn the purpose of Congress respecting my request of recall, and that of some employment for my secretary, William Temple Franklin. If I am kept here another winter, and as much weakened by it as by the last, I may as well resolve to spend the remainder of my days here; for I shall be hardly able to bear the fatigues of the voyage in returning. During my

long absence from America, my friends are continually diminishing by death, and my inducements to return in proportion. But I can make no preparations either for going conveniently, or staying comfortably here, nor take any steps towards making some other provision for my grandson, till I know what I am to expect. Be so good, my dear friend, as to send me a little private information. With great esteem, I am ever yours, most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1506. TO MR. AND MRS. JAY (L. C.)

Passy, May 13, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I find I shall not be able to see you again as I intended. My best Wishes, however, go with you, that you may have a prosperous Voyage and a happy sight of your Friends and Families.

Mr. Jay was so kind as to offer his Friendly Services to me in America. He will oblige me much by endeavouring to forward my Discharge from this Employment. Repose is now my only Ambition. If too, he should think with me, that my Grandson is qualified to serve the States as Secretary to a future Minister at this Court, or as *Chargé d'Affaires*, and will be kind enough to recommend such an Appointment, it will exceedingly oblige me. I have twice mentioned this in my letter to Congress, but have not been favored with any answer; which is hard, because the suspense prevents my endeavouring to promote him in some other way. I would not, however, be importunate; and therefore, if Mr. Jay should use his Interest without Effect, I will trouble them no

more on the subject. My Grandson's acquaintance with the Language, with the Court and Customs here, and the particular Regard M. de Vergennes has for him, are Circumstances in his favour.

God bless and protect you both. Embrace my little Friend for me, and believe me ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1507. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (P. A. E. E. U.)

Passy, May 31. 1784.

SOME inconveniences are said to have arisen from a want of certainty in the power of our consuls. The articles respecting that matter have been some time prepared and agreed to between M. de Rayneval and me. If there is no change of sentiment respecting them, I beg leave to request your Excellency would direct such steps to be taken as may be proper for compelling them. I am ready on the part of the United States to sign them at any time. With great respect, I am sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1508. METEOROLOGICAL IMAGINATIONS AND CONJECTURES¹ (L. C.)

Passy, May, 1784.

THERE seems to be a Region high in the Air over all Countries, where it is always Winter, where Frost exists continu-

¹ First printed in the "Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester," Vol. II, p. 357. It was communicated to the Society by Dr. Percival, and read December 22, 1784. — ED.

ally, since in the midst of Summer, on the Surface of the Earth, Ice falls often from above, in the Form of Hail.

Hailstones, of the great Weight we sometimes find them, did not probably acquire their Magnitude before they began to descend. The Air, being 800 times rarer than Water, is unable to support it but in the Shape of Vapour, a State in which its Particles are separated. As soon as they are condensed by the Cold of the upper Regions, so as to form a Drop, that Drop begins to fall. If it freezes into a Grain of Ice, that Ice descends. In descending, both the Drop of Water and the Grain of Ice are augmented by Particles of the Vapour they pass thro' in falling, and which they condense by their Coldness, and attach to themselves.

It is possible that, in Summer, much of what is Rain when it arrives at the Surface of the Earth, might have been Snow when it began its Descent; but, being thaw'd in passing thro' the warm Air near the Surface, it is changed from Snow into Rain.

How immensely cold must be the original Particle of Hail, which forms the Centre of the future Hailstone, since it is capable of communicating sufficient Cold, if I may so speak, because perhaps it is not by communicating Cold to the Particles of Vapour that it freezes them but by depriving them of their Heat, to freeze all the Mass of Vapour condensed round it, and form a Lump of perhaps 6 or 8 ounces in weight!

When, in Summer time, the Sun is high, and long every Day above the Horizon, his Rays strike the Earth more directly, and with longer Continuance, than in Winter; hence the Surface is more heated, and to a greater Depth, by the Effect of those Rays.

When Rain falls on the heated Earth, and soaks down into

it, it carries down with it a great part of the Heat, which by that means descends still deeper.

The Mass of Earth, to the depth perhaps of 30 Feet, being thus heated to a certain Degree, continues to retain its Heat for some time. Thus the first Snows, that fall in the Beginning of Winter, seldom lie long on the Surface, but are soon melted, and soon absorbed. After which, the Winds, that blow over the Country on which the Snows had fallen, are not rend'red so cold as they would have been, by those Snows, if they had remained. The Earth, too, thus uncovered by the Snows, which would have reflected the Sun's Rays, now absorbs them, receiving and retaining the Warmth they afford and thus the Approach of the Severity of Winter is retarded; and the extreme degree of its Cold is not always at the time we might expect it, viz. when the Sun is at its greatest Distance, and the Days shortest, but some time after that Period, according to the English Proverb, which says, "As the Day lengthens, the Cold strengthens;" the Causes of refrigeration continuing to operate, while the Sun returns too slowly, and his Force continues too weak, to counteract them.

During several of the Summer Months of the Year 1783, when the Effect of the Sun's Rays to heat the Earth in these northern Regions should have been greatest, there existed a constant Fog over all Europe. This Fog was of a permanent Nature; it was dry, and the Rays of the Sun seem'd to have little Effect towards dissipating it, as they easily do a moist Fog, arising from Water. They were indeed rend'red so faint in passing thro' it, that, when collected in the Focus of a Burning-Glass, they would scarce kindle brown Paper. Of course, their Summer Effect in heating the Earth was exceedingly diminished.

Hence the Surface was early frozen.

Hence the first Snows remained on it unmelted, and received continual Additions.

Hence the Air was more chilled and the Winds more severely cold. Hence perhaps the Winter of 1783-4, was more severe than any that had happened for many years.

The Cause of this Universal Fog is not yet ascertained. Whether it was adventitious to this Earth, and merely a Smoke proceeding from the Consumption by Fire of some of those great burning Balls or Globes which we happen to meet with in our rapid Course round the Sun, and which are sometimes seen to kindle and be destroy'd in passing our Atmosphere, and whose Smoke might be attracted and retain'd by our Earth: or whether it was the vast Quantity of Smoke, long continuing to issue during the Summer from Hecla, in Iceland, and that other Volcano which arose out of the Sea near that Island, which Smoke might be spread by various Winds, over the northern Part of the World, is yet uncertain.

It seems however worth the Enquiry, whether other hard Winters, recorded in History, were preceded by similar permanent and widely extended Summer Fogs. Because, if found to be so, Men might from such Fogs conjecture the Probability of a succeeding hard Winter, and of the damages to be expected by the breaking up of frozen Rivers at the Approach of Spring; and take such Measures as are possible and practicable, to secure themselves and Effects from the Mischiefs that attended the last.

1509. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹ (P. C.)

Passy, June 2, 1784.

SIR,

I have considered the Observations you did me the honour of communicating to me, concerning certain Inaccuracies of Expression, and suppos'd Defects of Formality in the Instrument of Ratification, some of which are said to be of such a Nature as to affect "the Validity of the Instrument."

The first is, "that the United States are named before his Majesty, contrary to the established Custom observed in every Treaty in which a Crowned Head and a Republic are the contracting Parties." With respect to this, it seems to me we should distinguish between that Act in which both join, to wit, the *Treaty*, and that which is the Act of each separately, the *Ratification*. It is necessary that all the Modes of Expression in the joint Act should be agreed to by both Parties, tho' in their separate Acts each Party is Master of, and alone accountable for its own mode. And on inspecting the Treaty, it will be found that his Majesty is always regularly named before the United States. Thus "the established Custom in *Treaties* between Crowned Heads and Republics," contended for on your Part, is strictly observed: And the ratification following the treaty contains these Words. "Now know ye, that we, the United States in Congress assembled, having seen and considered the Definitive Articles aforesaid, have *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and by these Presents do *approve, ratify, and confirm* the said Articles, AND EVERY

¹ From a secretary's copy in the collection of Mrs. L. Z. Leiter. The date in this copy appears to have been altered from June 2 to June 8. — ED.

PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF," &c. Hereby all those Articles, Parts, and Clauses, wherein the King is named before the United States, are *approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and this solemnly, under the Signature of the President of Congress, with the public Seal affixed by their Order, and countersigned by their Secretary.

No Declaration on this Subject more determinate or more authentic can possibly be made or given, which, when considered, may probably induce his Majesty's Ministers to waive the Proposition of our signing a similar Declaration, or of sending back the Ratification to be corrected in this Point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will, however, if it be still desired, transmit to Congress the Observation, and the Difficulty occasioned by it, and request their Orders upon it. In the mean time I may venture to say, that I am confident there was no intention of affronting his Majesty by this Order of Nomination, but that it resulted merely from that Sort of Complaisance, which every Nation seems to have for itself, and of that Respect for its own Government, customarily so expressed in its own Acts, of which the English among the rest afford an Instance, when in the Title of the King they always name Great Britain before France.

The second Objection is, "that the Term *Definitive Articles* is used instead of *Definitive Treaty*." If the words *Definitive Treaty* had been used in the Ratification instead of *Definitive Articles*, it might have been more correct, tho' the Difference seems not great, nor of much Importance, as in the Treaty itself it is called "the present *Definitive Treaty*."

The other Objections are, "that the Conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most

essential Points of Form necessary towards authenticating the Validity of the Instrument." The Situation of Seals and Signatures, in public Instruments differs in different Countries, tho' all equally valid; for, when all the Parts of an Instrument are connected by a Ribband, whose Ends are secured under the Impression of the Seal, the Signature and Seal, wherever plac'd, are understood as relating to and authenticating the whole. Our usage is to place them both together in the broad Margin near the Beginning of the Piece; and so they stand in the present Ratification, the concluding Words of which declare the Intention of such Signing and Sealing to be giving authenticity to the whole Instrument, viz. "*In Testimony* whereof, *We have caused* the Seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed; Witness his Excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esq^r, President;" and the Date supposed to be omitted, (perhaps from its not appearing in Figures) is nevertheless to be found written in Words at length, viz. "this fourteenth Day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four," which made the Figures unnecessary. With great Esteem and Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1510. TO CONDE DE CAMPOMANES (A. P. S.)

Passy, June 5, 1784.

SIR,

I have received much Instruction and Pleasure in reading your excellent Writings. I wish it were in my Power to make you a suitable Return of the same kind. I embrace the Opportunity, my much esteemed Friend Mr. Carmichael

affords me, of sending you a late Collection of some of my occasional Pieces, of which, if I should live to get home, I hope to publish another Edition much larger, more correct, and less unworthy of your Acceptance.

You are engaged in a great Work, reforming the ancient Habitudes, removing the Prejudices, and promoting the Industry of your Nation. You have in the Spanish People good Stuff to work upon, and by a steady Perseverance you will obtain perhaps a Success beyond your Expectation; for it is incredible the quantity of Good that may be done in a Country by a single Man, who will *make a Business* of it, and not suffer himself to be diverted from that Purpose by different Avocations, Studies, or Amusements.

There are two Opinions prevalent in Europe, which have mischievous Effects in diminishing national Felicity; the one, That useful Labour is dishonourable; the other, that Families may be perpetuated with Estates. In America we have neither of these Prejudices, which is a great Advantage to us. You will see our Ideas respecting the first, in a little Piece I send you, called *Information to those who would remove to America*. The second is mathematically demonstrable to be an Impossibility under the present Rules of Law and Religion. Since tho' the Estate may remain entire, the Family is continually dividing. For a man's Son is but half of his Family, his Grandson but a Fourth, his Great Grandson but an Eighth, the next but a Sixteenth of his Family; and, by the same Progression, in only nine Generations the present Proprietor's Part in the then Possessor of the Estate will be but a 512th, supposing the Fidelity of all the succeeding Wives equally certain with that of those now existing: Too small a Portion, methinks, to be anxious about, so as to oppose a legal Liberty

of breaking Entails and dividing Estates, which would contribute so much to the Prosperity of the Country. With great and sincere Esteem and Respect, and best Wishes for the Success of your patriotic Undertaking, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.¹

¹ To this letter Campomanes replied, July 26, 1784 (A. P. S.): —

“I have received, by the hands of my friend Mr. Carmichael, your estimable letter of the 5th of June, the collection of your miscellaneous writings, and the piece entitled, *Information to those who would remove to America*. All these writings exhibit proofs of their having proceeded from a statesman, endowed with foresight, and vigilant for the best interests of his country, according to the political combinations and systems of government under which they were composed; and they manifest, at the same time, an ardent desire for the general happiness of mankind, founded on principles and calculations carried to as high a degree of demonstration, as the vicissitude and inconsistency of the various systems adopted for the government of men will admit. . . .

“The frankness, with which you dissuade people in Europe from emigrating inconsiderately to America, is a proof of your general philanthropy, and of a candor peculiar to a good man, true philosopher, and genuine patriot. You extend this same benevolence to Spain, in your remarks respecting the honour that is due to labour, and against the entailment of estates. The former is now confirmed among us by a recent law, a copy of which I send herewith, declaring the honourable light in which every description of artisans should be regarded. Labourers were always honoured and favoured by our laws. As to what regards entailments, I refer you to what I wrote in the year 1765, at the end of my treatise upon *Mortmain*, in which I think I have demonstrated, that another regulation ought to precede this in the progress of legislation. I add also, that there is some diversity of circumstances between a monarchical and democratical constitution in this respect.

“I should have great pleasure in extending these reflections, if time would permit, although your penetration and sagacity would render them unnecessary. The honour conferred upon me by The American Philosophical Society, in electing me a member on the 16th of January, lays me under the pleasing obligation of expressing my gratitude through you, the worthy President of the Society. Desirous of reciprocating in some manner this act of courtesy, I proposed you as an honorary member of the Royal Academy of History, of which I am President. The proposal was responded to by universal acclamation; the Academy feeling in the highest degree honoured by having on its list the name of a man so eminent in the world of letters, and so distinguished for the part he has acted in a Revolution, the most memorable in the history of modern times.” — ED.

1511. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

Passy, June 14, 1784.

DEAR SIR

I received yours of April 19th,² with the information you obtained from our old neighbour, Reuben Haines, respecting Marggrander,³ for which I thank you. I am much pestered with applications to make such enquiries, and often obliged to promise that I will transmit them; but I would not wish you to take more trouble, than to ask questions of the members of Congress, or others that fall in your way, and communicate to me their answers, if of any importance. I have also a multitude of projects sent to me, with requests that I would lay them before Congress. They are plans and schemes of Government and Legislation, Education, Defence, Manufactures, Commerce, &c., form'd by people who have great good will to us, but are totally ignorant of our affairs and circumstances; whence their projects are for the most part wild and impracticable, or unfit to be presented to Congress, as not pertaining to their jurisdiction. I have therefore not forwarded them; but will now and then send some of them for your amusement, if you should ever have any leisure, that you may see how people make shoes for feet they have never measured.

As your letter mentions nothing of publick affairs, I imagined I might have had, by the same conveyance, some

¹ From the original in New York Historical Society. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

³ Adam Marggrander was employed by Reuben Haines as a brewer and cooper. He enlisted as a substitute in the militia and marched into Northumberland County. Nothing further was known of him. — ED.

dispatches from Congress, perhaps in the care of some passenger; but a fortnight has past since the arrival of the packet-boat, and no Letters appear; so that I have nothing from Congress later than the 14 of January, and continue in great uncertainty as to my return.

Mr. Norris¹ came here, after residing some time at Liege. He staid but a week or two at Paris, and then removed to a country town not far distant, where nothing but French is spoken, in order to improve himself in that language. He seems a sensible, discreet young man, and I should with pleasure render him any service that may be in my power.

The King of Sweden is now at this court, enjoying the various splendid entertainments provided for him. The Danish Minister is astonished, that the Congress are so long without taking any notice of the proposed Treaty. With great esteem, I am ever, my Dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1512. TO THOMAS MIFFLIN (L. C.)

Passy, June 16, 1784.

SIR,

My Letter by Mr. Jay acquainted your Excellency, that the Ratifications of the Definitive Treaty were exchanged. A Copy of the British part was also sent by him.

Mr. Hartley remained here expecting Instructions to treat with us on the Subject of Commerce. The Bustle attending a new Election and Meeting of Parliament, he imagined might occasion the long Delay of those Instructions. He

¹ Son of Isaac Norris, Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. — ED.

now thinks, that, the Affair of American Trade being under the Consideration of Parliament, it is probable no Treaty will be propos'd till the Result is known. Mr. Jay, who sail'd for America the 1st Inst. from Dover, and who saw there several of our Friends from London before his Departure, and Mr. Laurens who left London the 6th to go in the Falmouth Packet, will be able to give you more perfect Informations than I can, of what may be expected as the Determination of the British government respecting our Intercourse with their Islands; and, therefore, I omit my Conjectures, only mentioning, that from various Circumstances there seems to be some lurking Remains of ill Humour there, and of Resentment against us, which only wants a favourable Opportunity to manifest itself.

This makes it more necessary for us to be upon our guard and prepared for Events, that a Change in the Affairs of Europe may produce; its Tranquility depending, perhaps, on the Life of one Man, and it being impossible to foresee in what Situation a new Arrangement of its various Interests may place us. Ours will be respected in proportion to the apparent Solidity of our Government, the Support of our Credit, the Maintenance of a good Understanding with our Friends, and our Readiness for Defence. All which I persuade myself will be taken care of.

Inclose I send a Copy of a Letter from Mr. Hartley to me, respecting some suppos'd Defects in the Ratification, together with my Answer, which he has transmitted to London. The Objections appeared to me trivial and absurd; but I thought it prudent to treat them with as much Decency as I could, lest the ill Temper should be augmented, which might be particularly inconvenient, while the Commerce was under

Consideration. There has not yet been time for Mr. Hartley to hear whether my Answer has been satisfactory, or whether the Ministers will still insist on my sending for an amended Copy from America, as they proposed.

I do not perceive the least Diminution in the good Disposition of this Court towards us, and I hope care will be taken to preserve it.

The Marquis de la Fayette, who will have the honour of delivering this to you, has, ever since his Arrival in Europe, been very industrious in his Endeavours to serve us, and promote our Interests, and has been of great Use on several Occasions. I should wish the Congress might think fit to express in some proper Manner their Sense of his Merit.

My Malady prevents my going to Versailles, as I cannot bear a Carriage upon Pavement; but my Grandson goes regularly on Court days to supply my Place, and is well receiv'd there. The last Letters I have had the honour of receiving from you, are of the 14th of January. With great Respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1513. LOOSE THOUGHTS ON A UNIVERSAL
FLUID ¹ (L. C.)

Passy, June 25, 1784.

UNIVERSAL SPACE, as far as we know of it, seems to be filled with a subtil Fluid, whose Motion, or Vibration, is called Light.

¹ From an auto. draft in L. C. endorsed by Franklin, "For the Consideration of my dear Friend, David Rittenhouse, Esq^r" There is also in L. C. a contemporary copy in French. The paper was read before The American Philosophical Society, June 20, 1788. — ED.

This Fluid may possibly be the same with that, which, being attracted by, and entring into other more solid Matter, dilates the Substance, by separating the constituent Particles, and so rendering some Solids fluid, and maintaining the Fluidity of others; of which Fluid when our Bodies are totally deprived, they are said to be frozen; when they have a proper Quantity, they are in Health, and fit to perform all their Functions; it is then called natural Heat; when too much, it is called Fever; and, when forced into the Body in too great a Quantity from without, it gives Pain by separating and destroying the Flesh, and is then called Burning; and the Fluid so entring and acting is called Fire.

While organized Bodies, animal or vegetable, are augmenting in Growth, or are supplying their continual Waste, is not this done by attracting and consolidating this Fluid called Fire, so as to form of it a Part of their Substance; and is it not a Separation of the Parts of such Substance, which, dissolving its solid State, sets that subtil Fluid at Liberty, when it again makes its appearance as Fire?

For the Power of Man relative to Matter seems limited to the dividing it, or mixing the various kinds of it, or changing its Form and Appearance by different Compositions of it; but does not extend to the making or creating of new Matter, or annihilating the old. Thus, if Fire be an original Element, or kind of Matter, its Quantity is fixed and permanent in the Universe. We cannot destroy any Part of it, or make addition to it; we can only separate it from that which confines it, and so set it at Liberty, as when we put Wood in a Situation to be burnt; or transfer it from one Solid to another, as when we make Lime by burning Stone, a Part of the Fire dislodg'd from the Wood being left in the Stone. May not

this Fluid, when at Liberty, be capable of penetrating and entering into all Bodies organiz'd or not, quitting easily in totality those not organiz'd; and quitting easily in part those which are; the part assum'd and fix'd remaining till the Body is dissolved?

Is it not this Fluid which keeps asunder the Particles of Air, permitting them to approach, or separating them more, in proportion as its Quantity is diminish'd or augmented? Is it not the greater Gravity of the Particles of Air, which forces the Particles of this Fluid to mount with the Matters to which it is attach'd, as Smoke or Vapour?

Does it not seem to have a great Affinity with Water, since it will quit a Solid to unite with that Fluid, and go off with it in Vapour, leaving the Solid cold to the Touch, and the Degree measurable by the Thermometer?

The Vapour rises attach'd to this Fluid, but at a certain height they separate, and the Vapour descends in Rain, retaining but little of it, in Snow or Hail less. What becomes of that Fluid? Does it rise above our Atmosphere, and mix with the universal Mass of the same kind? Or does a spherical Stratum of it, denser, or less mix'd with Air, attracted by this Globe, and repell'd or push'd up only to a certain height from its Surface, by the greater Weight of Air, remain there, surrounding the Globe, and proceeding with it round the Sun?

In such case, as there may be a Continuity or Communication of this Fluid thro' the Air quite down to the Earth, is it not by the Vibrations given to it by the Sun that Light appears to us; and may it not be, that every one of the infinitely small Vibrations, striking common Matter with a certain Force, enters its Substance, is held there by Attraction,

and augmented by succeeding Vibrations, till the Matter has receiv'd as much as their Force can drive into it?

Is it not thus, that the Surface of this Globe is continually heated by such repeated Vibrations in the Day, and cooled by the Escape of the Heat, when those Vibrations are discontinu'd in the Night, or intercepted and reflected by Clouds?

Is it not thus that Fire is amass'd, and makes the greatest Part of the Substance of combustible Bodies?

Perhaps, when this Globe was first form'd, and its original Particles took their Place at certain Distances from the Centre, in proportion to their greater or less Gravity, the fluid Fire, attracted towards that Centre, might in great part be oblig'd, as lightest, to take place above the rest, and thus form the Sphere of Fire above suppos'd, which would afterwards be continually diminishing by the Substance it afforded to organiz'd Bodies, and the Quantity restor'd to it again by the Burning or other Separating of the Parts of those Bodies.

Is not the natural Heat of Animals thus produc'd, by separating in Digestion the Parts of Food, and setting their Fire at Liberty?

Is it not this Sphere of Fire, which kindles the wandring Globes that sometimes pass thro' it in our Course round the Sun, have their Surface kindled by it, and burst when their included Air is greatly rarified by the Heat on their burning Surfaces? May it not have been from such Considerations that the ancient Philosophers supposed a Sphere of Fire to exist above the Air of our Atmosphere?

1514. OF THE PAPER MONEY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ¹ (L. C.)

MUCH Conversation having arisen lately on the Subject of this Money, and few Persons being well acquainted with the Nature of it, you may possibly oblige many of your Readers by the following Account of it.

When Great Britain commenced the present War upon the Colonies, they had neither Arms nor Ammunition, nor Money to purchase them or to pay Soldiers. The new Government had not immediately the Consistence necessary for collecting heavy Taxes; nor would Taxes that could be raised within the Year during Peace, have been sufficient for a Year's Expence in Time of War; they therefore printed a Quantity of Paper Bills, each expressing to be of the Value of a certain Number of Spanish Dollars, from One to Thirty; with these they paid, clothed, and fed their Troops, fitted out Ships, and supported the War during Five Years against one of the most powerful Nations of Europe.

The Paper thus issued, passed current in all the internal Commerce of the United States at par with Silver during the first Year; supplying the Place of the Gold and Silver formerly current, but which was sent out of the Country to purchase Arms, &c., or to defray Expences of the Army in Canada: But the great Number of Troops necessary to be kept on foot to defend a Coast of near 500 Leagues in Length, from an Enemy, who, being Masters at Sea, could land

¹ The date of composition guessingly set down by Bigelow and by Fitzpatrick (List of the B. F. Papers in the L. C.) is July 3, 1784. — ED.

Troops where they pleas'd, occasion'd such a Demand for Money, and such frequent additional Emissions of new Bills, that the Quantity became much greater than was wanted for the Purposes of Commerce; and, the Commerce being diminished by the War, the Surplus Quantity of Cash was by that means also proportionally augmented.

It has been long and often observed, that when the current Money of a Country is augmented beyond the Occasions for Money, as a Medium of Commerce, its Value as Money diminishes. Its Interest is reduced, and the Principal sinks, if some Means are not found to take off the Surplus Quantity. Silver may be carried out of the Country that produces it, into other Countries, and thereby prevent too great a Fall of its Value in that Country. But, when by this Means it grows more plentiful in all other Countries, nothing prevents its sinking in Value. Thus within 300 Years since the Discovery of America, and the vast Quantities of Gold and Silver imported from thence, and spread over Europe and the rest of the World, those Metals have sunk in value 4 fifths, that is, five Ounces of Silver will not purchase more Labour now than one Ounce would have done before that Discovery.

Had Spain been able to confine all that Treasure within its own Territories, silver would probably have been there of no more Value by this Time than Iron or Lead. The Exportation has kept its Value on a Level with its Value in other Parts of the World. Paper Money not being easily receiv'd out of the Country that makes it, if the Quantity becomes excessive, the Depreciation is quicker and greater.

Thus the excessive Quantities which Necessity oblig'd the Americans to issue for continuing the War, occasion'd a Depreciation of Value, which, commencing towards the End

of 1776, has gone on augmenting, till at the beginning of the present Year, 50, 60, and as far as 70 Dollars in Paper were reckon'd not more than equal to one Dollar in Silver, and the Prices of all things rose in Proportion.

Before the Depreciation commenc'd, the Congress, fearing it, stopt for a time the Emission of new Bills, and resolv'd to supply their Occasions by borrowing. Those who lent them the Paper Money at that time and until March, 1778, fix'd their Property and prevented its Depreciation; the interest being regularly paid by Bills of Exchange on France, which supports the Value of the principal Sums lent.

These Loans not being sufficient, the Congress were forced to print more Bills, and the Depreciation proceeded. The Congress would borrow no more on the former Conditions of paying the Interest in French Money at Paris; but great Sums were offered and lent them on the Terms of being paid the Interest, and repaid the Principal in the same Bills in America.

These Loans in some degree lessen'd, but did not quite take away, the Necessity of new Emissions; so that it at length arrived at the excessive difference between the Value of Paper and Silver, that is above mentioned.

To put an End to this Evil, which destroy'd all certainty in Commerce, the Congress first resolved to diminish the Quantity gradually by Taxes, which, tho' nominally vastly great, were really less heavy than they appear'd to be, and were readily paid. By these Taxes 15 Millions of dollars, of the 200 Millions extant, are to be brought in monthly and burnt. This Operation will destroy the whole Quantity, to wit, 200,000,000, in about 14 Months. Thirty Millions have already been so destroy'd.

To prevent in the mean time the farther Progress of the Depreciation, and give some kind of determinate Value to the Paper, it was ordain'd, that, for every sum of Forty Dollars payable by any Person as Tax, he might discharge himself by paying One Dollar in Silver. Whether this Expedient will produce the Effect intended or not, Experience and Time must discover.

The general Effect of the Depreciation among the Inhabitants of the States has been this, that it has operated as a *gradual Tax* upon them. Their Business has been done and paid for by the Paper Money, and every Man has paid his Share of the Tax according to the Time he retain'd any of the Money in his Hands, and to the Depreciation within that Time. Thus it has proved a Tax on Money, a kind of Property very difficult to be taxed in any other Mode; and it has fallen more equally than many other Taxes, as those People paid most, who, being richest, had most Money passing thro' their Hands.

With regard to the Paper Money or Bills borrowed by the Congress, it appears by the above Account to be under two different Descriptions.

First, the Quantity of Bills borrowed before the Depreciation, the Interest of which in Silver was to be and is paid in France. The Principal of this Sum is considered as equal in Value to so many Dollars of Silver as were borrowed in Paper, and will be paid in Silver accordingly.

Secondly, the Quantities of Bills borrowed in different Stages of the Depreciation down to the present time. These Sums are, by a Resolution of Congress, to be repaid in Silver according to the Value they were of in Silver at the Time they were lent; and the Interest is to be paid at the same Rate.

Thus those Lenders have their Property secured from the Loss by Depreciation subsequent to the Time of their Loan.

All the Inhabitants are satisfied and pleas'd with this Arrangement, their Public Debt being by this Means reduced to a small Sum. And the new Paper Money, which bears Interest, and for the Payment of which solid Funds are provided, is actually in Credit equal to real Silver.

If any Persons living in distant Countries have, thro' their Absence from their Property in America, suffered Loss by not having it timely fix'd in the several Loans above mentioned, it is not doubted but that, upon an Application to Congress stating the Case, they will meet with Redress.

The real Money us'd in the United States is French, Spanish, Portuguese, and English coins, Gold and Silver. The most common is Spanish mill'd dollars, worth 5 livres 5 sols tournois.

The nominal Money is generally Paper, reckoned in Pounds, Shillings, and Pence, of different Value in the different States when compar'd with real Money, and that Value often changing, so that nothing certain can be said of it. But everywhere the accounts are kept in the nominal Pounds, Shillings, and Pence, the Pound containing twenty Shillings, and the Shillings twelve Pence, whatever may be the real Value.

Bills of Exchange are frequently drawn on Europe; the Rate of Exchange differing in different States, and fluctuating in the same State, occasioned by the greater or less Plenty of Bills or of Demand for others; they are commonly drawn at 30 Days' Sight.

The Usages in Buying and Selling Merchandises, are much the same as in Europe, except that in Virginia the Planter

carries his Tobacco to Magazines, where it is inspected by Officers, who ascertain its Quality and give Receipts expressing the Quantity. The Merchants receive these Receipts in Payment for Goods, and afterwards draw the Tobacco out of the Magazines for Exportation. Weights and Measures are uniform in all the States, following the Standard of Great Britain.

Money is lent either upon Bond or on Mortgage, payable in a Year with Interest. The Interest differs in the different States from 5 to 7 per cent.

Goods are generally imported on 18 Months' Credit from Europe, sold in the Country at 12 Months' credit.

Billets or Promissory Notes, payable to the Creditor or Order, are in use, and demandable when due, as well as accepted Bills of Exchange, without any Days of Grace, but by particular Favour.

1515. TO THOMAS PERCIVAL (L. C.)

Passy, July 17th 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I received yesterday, by Mr. White, your kind Letter of May 11th, with the most agreeable Present of your new Book.¹ I read it before I slept, which is a Proof of the good Effects your happy Manner has of drawing your Reader on, by mixing little Anecdotes and historical Facts with your Instructions. Be pleased to accept my thankful Acknowledgments for the Pleasure it has afforded me.

¹ This letter is in A. P. S. "The present" was a copy of Percival's "Moral and Literary Dissertations." Mr. White was a young gentleman of Manchester, a member of the society mentioned below.—ED.

It is astonishing that the murderous Practice of Duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly, when Duels were used to determine Lawsuits, from an Opinion that Providence would in every Instance favour Truth and Right with Victory, they were excusable. At present, they decide nothing. A Man says something, which another tells him is a Lie. They fight; but, whichever is killed, the Point in dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant little Story here. A Gentleman in a Coffee-house desired another to sit farther from him. "Why so?" "Because, Sir, you stink." "That is an Affront, and you must fight me." "I will fight you, if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the Matter. For if you kill me, I shall stink too; and if I kill you, [you] will stink, if possible, worse than you do at present." How can such miserable Sinners as we are entertain so much Pride, as to conceit that every Offence against our imagined Honour merits *Death*? These petty Princes in their own Opinion would call that Sovereign a Tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil Language, tho' pointed at his sacred Person; yet every one of them makes himself Judge in his own Cause, condemns the offender without a Jury, and undertakes himself to be the Executioner. With sincere and great Esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Our Friend, Mr. Vaughan, may perhaps communicate to you some Conjectures of mine relating to the Cold of last winter, which I sent to him in return for the Observations on Cold of Professor Wilson.¹ If he should, and you

¹ Professor Patrick Wilson of Glasgow. — ED.

think them worthy so much notice, you may show them to your Philosophical Society,¹ to which I wish all imaginable success. Their Rules appear to me excellent.

1516. TO MASON WEEMS AND EDWARD GANT²
(L. C.)

Passy, July 18, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

On receipt of your Letter,³ acquainting me that the Archbishop [of Canterbury] would not permit you to be ordain'd, unless you took the Oath of Allegiance, I apply'd to a Clergyman of my Acquaintance for Information on the Subject of your obtaining Ordination here. His Opinion was, that it could not be done; and that, if it were done, you would be requir'd to vow Obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordain'd by their Bishop in America, Powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was, "The Thing is impossible, unless the Gentlemen become Catholics."

This is an Affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask Questions and propose means that are im-

¹ The Philosophical Society of Manchester, of which Dr. Percival was one of the principal founders and ornaments. — W. T. F.

² Mason Locke Weems (1760?-1825) was born in Virginia. He is the celebrated "Parson" Weems who resigned his clerical charge to become a book agent for Mathew Carey. His fertile fancy and easy conscience created the indestructible stories of the youth of Washington. He wrote also a "Life of Benjamin Franklin" (1817). Edward Gant (1746-1837), a native of Maryland, practised medicine before applying for holy orders. He became chaplain of the United States Senate. — ED.

³ Dated July 9, 1784, No. 170 Strand. In A. P. S. — ED.

proper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well, if you were of the Church of Ireland? The Religion is the same, tho' there is a different set of Bishops and Archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the Bishop of Derry, who is a man of liberal Sentiments, he might give you Orders as of that Church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you, (and I am not sure that the Bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you, unless you become Lutherans,) what is to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopalian clergy of America, in my humble Opinion, cannot do better than to follow the Example of the first Clergy of Scotland, soon after the Conversion of that Country to Christianity, who when their King had built the Cathedral of St. Andrew's, and requested the King of Northumberland to lend his Bishops to ordain one for them, that their Clergy might not as heretofore be obliged to go to Northumberland for Orders, and their Request was refused; they assembled in the Cathedral; and, the Mitre, Crosier, and Robes of a Bishop being laid upon the Altar, they, after earnest Prayers for Direction in their Choice, elected one of their own Number; when the King said to him, "*Arise, go to the Altar, and receive your Office at the Hand of God.*" His brethren led him to the Altar, robed him, put the Crozier in his Hand, and the Mitre on his Head, and he became the first Bishop of Scotland.

If the British Isles were sunk in the Sea (and the Surface of this Globe has suffered greater Changes), you would probably take some such Method as this; and, if they persist in denying you Ordination, 'tis the same thing. An hundred years hence, when People are more enlightened, it will be

wondered at, that Men in America, qualified by their Learning and Piety to pray for and instruct their Neighbors, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a Voyage of six thousand Miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old Gentleman at Canterbury; who seems, by your Account, to have as little Regard for the Souls of the People of Maryland, as King William's Attorney-General, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The Reverend Commissary Blair, who projected the College of that Province, and was in England to solicit Benefactions and a Charter, relates, that the Queen, in the King's Absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the Charter, which was to be given, with £2000 in Money, he oppos'd the Grant; saying that the Nation was engag'd in an expensive War, that the Money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least Occasion for a College in Virginia. Blair represented to him, that its Intention was to educate and qualify young Men to be Ministers of the Gospel, much wanted there; and begged Mr. Attorney would consider, that the People of Virginia had souls to be saved, as well as the People of England. "*Souls!*" says he, "*damn your Souls. Make Tobacco!*" I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1517. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (L. C.)

Passy, July 26th, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have received several Letters from you lately, dated June 16, June 30, and July 13. I thank you for the Information respecting the Proceedings of your West India Mer-

chants, or rather Planters. The Restraints what ever they may be upon our Commerce with your Islands, will prejudice their Inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us.

It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally one would imagine, that the interest of a few individuals should give way to general interest; but individuals manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address, than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils, to have the benefit of their collected wisdom; but we necessarily have, at the same time, the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower their wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and if we may judge by the acts, *arrêts*, and edicts, all the world over, for regulating commerce, an assembly of great men is the greatest fool upon earth.

I have received Cook's *Voyages*, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some Mistake the first Volume was omitted, and instead of it a Duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good Print of Cook, I should be glad to have it, being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the Pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me Pleasure; to receive your Account would give me more than all.

I am told, that the little Pamphlet of *Advice to such as would remove to America*, is reprinted in London, with my Name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a Copy, when you have an Opportunity of sending it.

Mr. H. has long continued here in Expectation of Instructions for making a Treaty of Commerce, but they do not

come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; tho' perhaps the Delay is only occasioned by the over great Burthen of Business at present on the Shoulders of your Ministers. We do not press the Matter, but are content to wait till they can see their Interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a Treaty.

The Conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last Winter still appear to me probable. The moderate Season in Russia and Canada, do not weaken them. I think our Frost here began about the 24th of December; in America, the 12 of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had Pleasure in his Conversation. I wish much to see the new Pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the Return of your Wedding-day, and wish for your Sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much. He seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of Instruction, and makes judicious Observations. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously. I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's Pamphlet of Advice to America is a good one, and will do Good. You ask, "what Remedy I have for the growing Luxury of my Country, which gives so much *Offence* to all *English travellers* without exception." I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that Travellers are no good Judges whether our Luxury is growing or diminishing. Our People are hospitable, and have indeed too much Pride in displaying upon their Tables before Strangers the Plenty and Variety that our Country affords. They have the Vanity, too, of sometimes borrowing one another's Plate to entertain more

splendidly. Strangers being invited from House to House, and meeting every Day with a Feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary Way of living of all the Families where they dine; when perhaps each Family lives a Week after upon the Remains of the Dinner given. It is, I own, a Folly in our People to give *such Offence* to *English Travellers*. The first part of the Proverb is thereby verified, that *Fools make Feasts*. I wish in this Case the other were as true, *and wise Men eat them*. These Travellers might, one would think, find some Fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive Civility to them as Strangers.

I have not, indeed yet thought of a Remedy for Luxury I am not sure, that in a great State it is capable of a Remedy. Nor that the Evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the Definition of Luxury all unnecessary Expence, and then let us consider whether Laws to prevent such Expence are possible to be executed in a great Country, and whether, if they could be executed, our People generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the Hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy Luxuries a great Spur to Labour and Industry? May not Luxury, therefore, produce more than it consumes, if without such a Spur People would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember a Circumstance. The Skipper of a Shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small Service, for which he refused Pay. My Wife, understanding that he had a Daughter, sent her as a Present a new-fashioned Cap. Three Years After, this Skipper being at my House with an old Farmer of Cape May, his Passenger, he mentioned the Cap, and how much his Daughter had been pleased with it. "But,"

says he, "it proved a dear Cap to our Congregation." "How so?" "When my Daughter appeared in it at Meeting, it was so much admired, that all the Girls resolved to get such Caps from Philadelphia; and my Wife and I computed, that the whole could not have cost less than a hundred Pound." "True," says the Farmer, "but you do not tell all the Story. I think the Cap was nevertheless an Advantage to us, for it was the first thing that put our Girls upon Knitting worsted Mittens for Sale at Philadelphia, that they might have where-withal to buy Caps and Ribbands there; and you know that that Industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater Value, and answer better Purposes." Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little Piece of Luxury, since not only the Girls were made happier by having fine Caps, but the Philadelphians by the Supply of warm Mittens.

In our Commercial Towns upon the Seacoast, Fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich will be prudent, live within Bounds, and preserve what they have gained for their Posterity; others, fond of showing their Wealth, will be extravagant and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this; and perhaps it is not always an evil to the Publick. A Shilling spent idly by a Fool, may be picked up by a Wiser Person, who knows better what to do with it. It is therefore not lost. A vain, silly Fellow builds a fine House, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in few years ruins himself; but the Masons, Carpenters, Smiths, and other honest Tradesmen have been by his Employ assisted in maintaining and raising their Families; the Farmer has been paid for his labour, and encouraged, and the Estate is now in better Hands. In some Cases, indeed, certain

Modes of Luxury may be a publick Evil, in the same Manner as it is a Private one. If there be a Nation, for Instance, that exports its Beef and Linnen, to pay for its Importation of Claret and Porter, while a great Part of its People live upon Potatoes, and wear no Shirts, wherein does it differ from the Sot, who lets his Family starve, and sells his Clothes to buy Drink? Our American Commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our Victuals to your Islands for Rum and Sugar; the substantial Necessaries of Life for Superfluities. But we have Plenty, and live well nevertheless, tho' by being soberer, we might be richer.

By the by, here is just issued an *arrêt* of Council taking off all the Duties upon the exportation of Brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your Rum; in which case there is no doubt but they will be prefer'd, and we shall be better able to bear your Restrictions on our Commerce. There are Views here, by augmenting their Settlements, of being able to supply the growing People of America with the Sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I guess England will get as little by the Commercial War she has begun with us, as she did by the Military. But to return to Luxury.

The vast Quantity of Forest Lands we have yet to clear, and put in order for Cultivation, will for a long time keep the Body of our Nation laborious and frugal. Forming an Opinion of our People and their Manners by what is seen among the Inhabitants of the Seaports, is judging from an improper Sample. The People of the Trading Towns may be rich and luxurious, while the Country possesses all the Virtues, that tend to private Happiness and publick Prosperity. Those Towns are not much regarded by the Country; they

are hardly considered as an essential Part of the States; and the Experience of the last War has shown, that their being in the Possession of the Enemy did not necessarily draw on the Subjection of the Country, which bravely continued to maintain its Freedom and Independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some Political Arithmetician, that, if every Man and Woman would work for four Hours each Day on something useful, that Labour would produce sufficient to procure all the Necessaries and Comforts of Life, Want and Misery would be banished out of the World, and the rest of the 24 hours might be Leisure and Pleasure.

What occasions then so much Want and Misery? It is the Employment of Men and Women in Works, that produce neither the Necessaries nor Conveniences of Life, who, with those who do nothing, consume the Necessaries raised by the Laborious. To explain this.

The first Elements of Wealth are obtained by Labour, from the Earth and Waters. I have Land, and raise Corn. With this, if I feed a Family that does nothing, my Corn will be consum'd, and at the end of the Year I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed them, I employ them, some in Spinning, others in hewing Timber and sawing Boards, others in making Bricks, &c. for Building, the Value of my Corn will be arrested and remain with me, and at the end of the Year we may all be better clothed and better lodged. And if, instead of employing a Man I feed in making Bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the Corn he eats is gone, and no Part of his Manufacture remains to augment the Wealth and Convenience of the family; I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling Man, unless the

rest of my Family work more, or eat less, to make up the Deficiency he occasions.

Look round the World and see the Millions employ'd in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life are in question. What is the Bulk of Commerce, for which we fight and destroy each other, but the Toil of Millions for Superfluities, to the great Hazard and Loss of many Lives by the constant Dangers of the Sea? How much labour is spent in Building and fitting great Ships, to go to China and Arabia for Tea and Coffee, to the West Indies for Sugar, to America for Tobacco! These things cannot be called the Necessaries of Life, for our Ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A Question may be asked; Could all these People, now employed in raising, making, or carrying Superfluities, be subsisted by raising Necessaries? I think they might. The World is large, and a great Part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred Millions of Acres in Asia, Africa, and America are still Forest, and a great Deal even in Europe. On 100 Acres of this Forest a Man might become a substantial Farmer, and 100,000 Men, employed in clearing each his 100 Acres, would hardly brighten a Spot big enough to be Visible from the Moon, unless with Herschell's Telescope; so vast are the Regions still in Wood unimproved.

'Tis however, some Comfort to reflect, that, upon the whole, the Quantity of Industry and Prudence among Mankind exceeds the Quantity of Idleness and Folly. Hence the Increase of good Buildings, Farms cultivated, and populous Cities filled with Wealth, all over Europe, which a few Ages since were only to be found on the Coasts of the Mediterra-

nean; and this, notwithstanding the mad Wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year the Works of many Years' Peace. So that we may hope the Luxury of a few Merchants on the Seacoast will not be the Ruin of America.

One reflection more, and I will end this long, rambling Letter. Almost all the Parts of our Bodies require some Expence. The Feet demand Shoes; the Legs, Stockings; the rest of the Body, Clothing; and the Belly, a good deal of Victuals. *Our* Eyes, tho' exceedingly useful, ask, when reasonable, only the cheap Assistance of Spectacles, which could not much impair our Finances. But *the Eyes of other People* are the Eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine Clothes, fine Houses, nor fine Furniture.

Adieu, my dear Friend, I am

Yours ever

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. This will be delivered to you by my Grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your Civilities and Counsels. Please to accept a little Present of Books, I send by him, curious for the Beauty of the Impression.

1518. TO COMTE DE MERCY ARGENTEAU¹

Passy, July 30, 1784.

SIR,

I have the honour to communicate to your Excellency an extract from the instructions of Congress to their late Com-

¹ From "Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 515. Comte de Argenteau was Austrian Ambassador at the Court of Versailles. — ED.

missioners for treating of peace, expressing their desire to cultivate the friendship of his Imperial Majesty, and to enter into a treaty of commerce for the mutual advantage of his subjects and the citizens of the United States, which I request you will be pleased to lay before his Majesty. The appointing and instructing Commissioners for treaties of commerce with the powers of Europe generally has, by various circumstances, been long delayed, but is now done; and I have just received advice, that Mr. Jefferson, late Governor of Virginia, commissioned with Mr. Adams, our minister in Holland, and myself, for that service, is on his way hither, and may be expected by the end of August, when we shall be ready to enter into a treaty with his Imperial Majesty for the above purpose, if such should be his pleasure. With great and sincere respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1519. TO MESSRS. SEARS AND SMITH (A. P. S.)

Passy, Aug. 4, 1784.

GENTLEMEN,

Upon Receipt of yours relating to your Cargo of Slaves at Martinico, I endeavour'd to inform myself what was the Law in such Cases; and I found, that by an *arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi*, of the 28th of June, 1783, there is a Duty laid, of 100 Livres per head, on all Negroes imported in foreign Ships, and this Duty is granted and is to be paid as a Premium to the French Importers of Negroes, as an Encouragement to their own African Trade. Under these Circumstances I am advis'd, that it cannot be expected that a general national Law should be set aside in favour of a particular foreign

Ship; especially as the King, if he forgives the Duty to the Stranger, must thereby do Injustice to his own Subjects, to whom he had promised the Produce of that Duty, unless he pays it to them out of his own Money, which we cannot decently request him to do. I do not, therefore, see any Possibility of your avoiding the Payment. I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1520. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Passy, August 6, 1784.

SIR: — Mr. Bingham sent me last night, from Paris, your Excellency's letter of the 27th past, enclosing a copy of one from Mr. Jefferson. I had before sent you a copy of one from the same to me, which I hope you received. I enclose herewith copies of a letter from Mr. Thomson, some new instructions, and one of the commissions. The other two are in the same words, except that instead of the words the United Netherlands, there is in one France, and in the other Sweden. These came by Monsieur de la Luzerne, but it was not before Wednesday last that I received them. You will see that a good deal of business is cut out for us — treaties to be made with, I think, twenty powers in two years, — so that we are not likely to eat the bread of idleness; and that we may not surfeit by eating too much, our masters have diminished our allowance. I commend their economy, and shall imitate it by diminishing my expense. Our too liberal entertainment of our countrymen here has been reported at home by our

guests, and has given offence. They must be contented for the future, as I am, with plain beef and pudding. The readers of Connecticut newspapers ought not to be troubled for any more accounts of our extravagance. For my own part, if I could sit down to dinner on a piece of excellent salt pork and pumpkin, I would not give a farthing for all the luxuries of Paris.

B. FRANKLIN.

1521. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Aug. 15, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of July 22. I wish you had executed your Project of taking a little Trip to see me this Summer. You would have made me very happy, and might have bath'd your Children here, as well as at Southampton, I having a Bath in my House, besides the River in view. I like your monthly Account of them, and in Return send you my Daughter's Account of my Grandchildren at Philadelphia. You will see she expected me home this Summer; but my Constituents have sent me a new Commission, and I must stay another Winter. Can you not come and pass it with me here?

Temple, who proposes to have the Pleasure of delivering this to you, will explain to you how you may be accommodated, and, if you can resolve to come, will conduct you. Except being at home, which I begin now to fear I never shall be, nothing could give me greater Pleasure. Come, my dear Friend, live with me while I stay here, and go with me, if I do go, to America. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

P. S. My Love to the dear Children, particularly my Godson, for whom Temple has a little Present of French Books.

1522. TO WILLIAM FRANKLIN (B. M.)

Passy, Aug. 16, 1784.

DEAR SON,

I received your Letter of the 22d past, and am glad to find that you desire to revive the affectionate Intercourse, that formerly existed between us. It will be very agreeable to me; indeed nothing has ever hurt me so much and affected me with such keen Sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old Age by my only Son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up Arms against me, in a Cause, wherein my good Fame, Fortune and Life were all at Stake. You conceived, you say, that your Duty to your King and Regard for your Country requir'd this. I ought not to blame you for differing in Sentiment with me in Public Affairs. We are Men, all subject to Errors. Our Opinions are not in our own Power; they are form'd and govern'd much by Circumstances, that are often as inexplicable as they are irresistible. Your Situation was such that few would have censured your remaining Neuter, *tho' there are Natural Duties which precede political ones, and cannot be extinguish'd by them.*

This is a disagreeable Subject. I drop it. And we will endeavour, as you propose mutually to forget what has happened relating to it, as well as we can. I send your Son over to pay his Duty to you. You will find him much improv'd. He is greatly esteem'd and belov'd in this Country, and will make his Way anywhere. It is my Desire, that

he should study the Law, as a necessary Part of Knowledge for a public Man, and profitable if he should have occasion to practise it. I would have you therefore put into his hands those Law-books you have, viz. Blackstone, Coke, Bacon, Viner, &c. He will inform you, that he received the Letter sent him by Mr. Galloway, and the Paper it enclosed, safe.

On my leaving America, I deposited with that Friend for you, a Chest of Papers, among which was a Manuscript of nine or ten Volumes, relating to Manufactures, Agriculture, Commerce, Finance, etc., which cost me in England about 70 Guineas; eight Quire Books, containing the Rough Drafts of all my Letters while I liv'd in London. These are missing. I hope you have got them, if not, they are lost. Mr. Vaughan has publish'd in London a Volume of what he calls my Political Works. He proposes a second Edition; but, as the first was very incompleat, and you had many Things that were omitted, (for I used to send you sometimes the Rough Drafts, and sometimes the printed Pieces I wrote in London,) I have directed him to apply to you for what may be in your Power to furnish him with, or to delay his Publication till I can be at home again, if that may ever happen.

I did intend returning this year; but the Congress, instead of giving me Leave to do so, have sent me another Commission, which will keep me here at least a Year longer; and perhaps I may then be too old and feeble to bear the Voyage. I am here among a People that love and respect me, a most amiable Nation to live with; and perhaps I may conclude to die among them; for my Friends in America are dying off, one after another, and I have been so long abroad, that I should now be almost a Stranger in my own Country.

I shall be glad to see you when convenient, but would not

have you come here at present. You may confide to your son the Family Affairs you wished to confer upon with me, for he is discreet. And I trust, that you will prudently avoid introducing him to Company, that it may be improper for him to be seen with. I shall hear from you by him and any letters to me afterwards, will come safe under Cover directed to Mr. Ferdinand Grand, Banker at Paris. Wishing you Health, and more Happiness than it seems you have lately experienced, I remain your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

1523. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, August 16, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I some time since answered your kind Letter of July 12, returning the Proof of Mr. Turgot's Letter, with the Permission of his Friends to print it. I hope it came safe to hand. I had before received yours of April 6,¹ which gave me great Pleasure, as it acquainted me with your Welfare, and that of Dr. Priestley.

The Commencement here of the Art of Flying will, as you observe, be a new Epoch. The Construction and Manner of Filling the Balloons improves daily. Some of the Artists have lately gone to England. It will be well for your Philosophers to obtain from them what they know, or you will be behindhand; which in mechanic Operations is unusual for Englishmen.

I hope the Disagreements in our Royal Society are composed. Quarrels often disgrace both Sides; and Disputes

¹ Both of these letters, April 6 and July 12, are in A. P. S. — ED.

even on small Matters often produce Quarrels for want of knowing how to differ decently; an Art which it is said scarce anybody possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley.

I had indeed Thoughts of visiting England once more, and of enjoying the great Pleasure of seeing again my Friends there; but my Malady, otherwise tolerable, is I find irritated by Motion in a Carriage and I fear the Consequence of such a Journey; yet I am not quite resolv'd against it. I often think of the agreeable Evenings I used to pass with that excellent Collection of good Men, the Club at the *London*, and wish to be again among them. Perhaps I may pop in some Thursday evening when they least expect me. You may well believe it very pleasing to me to have Dr. Priestley associated with me among the Foreign Members of the Academy of Sciences. I had mention'd him upon every Vacancy, that has happen'd since my Residence here, and the Place has never been bestow'd more worthily.

When you wrote the Letter I am now answering, your Nation was involv'd in the Confusion of your new Election. When I think of your present crazy Constitution and its Diseases, I imagine the enormous Emoluments of Place to be among the greatest; and, while they exist, I doubt whether even the Reform of your Representation will cure the Evils constantly arising from your perpetual Factions. As it seems to be a settled Point at present, that the Minister must govern the Parliament, who are to do every thing he would have done; and he is to bribe them to do this, and the People are to furnish the Money to pay these Bribes; the Parliament appears to me a very expensive Machine for Government, and I apprehend the People will find out in time, that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper

to be governed, by the Minister alone; no Parliament being preferable to the present.

Your Newspapers are full of fictitious Accounts of Distractions in America. We know nothing of them. Mr. Jefferson, just arrived here, after a Journey thro' all the States from Virginia to Boston, assures me, that all is quiet, a general Tranquility reigns, and the People well satisfy'd with their present Forms of Government, a few insignificant Persons only excepted. These Accounts are I suppose intended as consolatory, and to discourage Emigrations. I think with you, that our Revolution is an important Event for the Advantage of Mankind in general. It is to be hoped that the Lights we enjoy, which the ancient Governments in their first Establishment could not have, may preserve us from their Errors. In this the Advice of wise Friends may do us much good, and I am sure that which you have been so kind as to offer us will be of great Service.

Mr. Jay is gone to America; but Mr. Adams is just arriv'd here, and I shall acquaint him with your remembrance of him. Poor Paradise ¹ whom you mention I respect and pity. But there is no helping him. He seems calculated by Nature for Unhappiness and will be equally miserable whether with or without his wife,² having no firmness of Mind. I doubt his

¹ John Paradise (1743-1795), born at Salonica (Macedonia), son of the English consul at that place, was an extraordinary linguist and one of Dr. Johnson's friends and a mourner at his funeral. — ED.

² Paradise married "a beautiful and lively American" whose ungovernable temper was the talk of the town. See Fanny Burney, "Diary and Letters," Vol. II, pp. 116-122. The property in Virginia was hers and she retired there after her husband's death. Price wrote to Franklin, "the folly, ill-temper and extravagance of his [Paradise's] wife produced for some weeks a Separation between him and her, and made him one of the most unhappy men I ever saw." — ED.

Property in Virginia may suffer by his Irresolution. Many Thanks for your kind Wishes respecting my Health and Happiness, which I return fourfold, being ever with the sincerest Esteem, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1524. TO BENJAMIN WEST¹ (P. C.)

Passy, Aug. 17, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

I forget whether I answered in its time your kind letter by Mr. Dagge. I have it now before me, and there will be no harm in answering it twice. It gave me great Pleasure, as it inform'd me of the Welfare of a Family I so much esteem and love, and that my Godson is a promising Boy. I wish much to see you all once more. The Malady I have, tho' otherwise tolerable, prevents my using a Carriage, and so discourages the Journey. If I grow better, and I do think I am mending, possibly I may undertake it before I go to America. You can tell me whether my Appearance in London may not be offensive to some whom I ought not and do not desire to offend any farther. I am glad to hear that Mr. and Mrs. Aufrere are well, and preserve me in their kind Remembrance.² They are Persons that I very much esteem and respect. They had an amiable Daughter who was married before I left England. Is she well, and has she Children? This will be delivered to you by my Grandson who respects

¹ From the original in the autograph collection of Mr. John Boyd Thacher. — ED.

² Anthony Aufrere of Hoveton Hall, Norfolk, who married Anna, only daughter of John Norris of Witton in Norfolk, and sister of John Norris, founder of the Norrisian professorship at Cambridge. — ED

you infinitely. My Love to Raphael and my Godson. I shall be glad to see Raphael¹ here, and would have him come at the Time of the Salon. Embrace Betsey² for me most affectionately, and believe me ever, my dear Friend,

Yours sincerely

B. FRANKLIN.

1525. TO LORD HOWE (L. C.)

Passy, Augt 18., 1784.

MY LORD,

I received lately the very valuable *Voyage* of the late Captain Cook, kindly sent to me by your Lordship in consideration of my Good-will in issuing Orders towards the protection of that illustrious Discoverer from any Interruption in his Return home by American Cruisers. The Reward vastly exceeds the small Merit of the Action, which was no more than a Duty to Mankind. I am very sensible of his Majesty's Goodness in permitting this Favour to me, and I desire that my thankful acknowledgements may be accepted. With great Respect, I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.³

¹ Raphael Lamar West (1769-1850), the elder of Benjamin West's two sons. — ED.

² Mrs. West, *née* Elizabeth Shewell. — ED.

³ A gold medal was struck by order of the Royal Society, with particular reference to the protection afforded to Captain Cook's vessels by the Emperor of Russia and the King of France. The Society bestowed upon Dr. Franklin a compliment similar to the King's, by presenting to him one of these medals. — S.

1526. TO WILLIAM STRAHAN (L. C.)

Passy, Aug^t 19.th 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of Ap^l 17th. You will have the goodness to place my delay in answering to the Account of Indisposition and Business, and excuse it. I have now that letter before me; and my Grandson, whom you may formerly remember a little Scholar of Mr. Elphinston's, purposing to set out in a day or two on a visit to his Father in London, I set down to scribble a little to you, first recommending him as a worthy young Man to your Civilities and Counsels.

You press me much to come to England. I am not without strong Inducements to do so; the Fund of Knowledge you promise to Communicate to me is an Addition to them, and no small one. At present it is impracticable. But, when my Grandson returns, come with him. We will then talk the matter over, and perhaps you may take me back with you. I have a Bed at your service, and will try to make your Residence, while you can stay with us, as agreeable to you, if possible, as I am sure it will be to me.

You do not "approve the annihilation of profitable Places; for you do not see why a Statesman, who does his Business well, should not be paid for his Labour as well as any other Workman." Agreed. But why more than any other Workman? The less the Salary the greater the Honor. In so great a Nation, there are many rich enough to afford giving their time to the Public; and there are, I make no doubt, many wise and able Men, who would take as much Pleasure

in governing for nothing, as they do in playing Chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest of Amusements. That this Opinion is not Chimerical, the Country I now live in affords a Proof; its whole Civil and Criminal Law Administration being done for nothing, or in some sense for less than nothing; since the Members of its Judiciary Parliaments buy their Places, and do not make more than *three per cent* for their Money by their Fees and Emoluments, while the legal Interest is *five*; so that in Fact they give two per cent to be allow'd to govern, and all their time and trouble into the Bargain. Thus *Profit*, one Motive for desiring Place, being abolish'd, there remains only *Ambition*; and that being in some degree ballanced by *Loss*, you may easily conceive, that there will not be very violent Factions and Contentions for such Places, nor much of the Mischief to the Country, that attends your Factions, which have often occasioned Wars, and overloaded you with Debts impayable.

I allow you all the Force of your Joke upon the Vagrancy of our Congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made too much Use by shifting too often. But they have two other Rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your Parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the Breath of a Minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

You "fairly acknowledge, that the late War terminated quite contrary to your Expectation." Your expectation was ill founded; for you would not believe your old Friend, who told you repeatedly, that by those Measures England would lose her Colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his Master that

he would break his Leg. You believ'd rather the Tales you heard of our Poltroonery and Impotence of Body and Mind. Do you not remember the Story you told me of the Scotch sergeant, who met with a Party of Forty American Soldiers, and, tho' alone, disarm'd them all, and brought them in Prisoners? A Story almost as Improbable as that of the Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in Five of the enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my Friend, sensible and Judicious as you are, but partaking of the general Infatuation, you seemed to believe it.

The Word *general* puts me in mind of a General, your General Clarke, who had the Folly to say in my hearing at Sir John Pringle's, that, with a Thousand British grenadiers, he would undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the Males, partly by force and partly by a little Coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of Animals very little superior to Brutes. The Parliament too believ'd the stories of another foolish General, I forget his Name, that the Yankeys never *felt bold*. Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the Parliament did not think the Petitions of such Creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an Assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous Pride and Insolence? You first sent small Armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these, whenever they ventured to penetrate our Country beyond the Protection of their Ships, were either repulsed and obliged to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten, and taken Prisoners. An American Planter, who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to Command our Troops, and continued during the whole War. This Man sent home to you, one after another, five of your

best Generals baffled, their Heads bare of Laurels, disgraced even in the Opinion of their Employers.

Your contempt of our Understandings, in Comparison with your own, appeared to be not much better founded than that of our Courage, if we may judge by this Circumstance, that, in whatever Court of Europe a Yankey negociator appeared, the wise British Minister was routed, put in a passion, pick'd a quarrel with your Friends, and was sent home with a Flea in his Ear.

But after all, my dear Friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our Success to any superiority in any of those Points. I am too well acquainted with all the Springs and Levers of our Machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that, if it had not been for the Justice of our Cause, and the consequent Interposition of Providence, in which we had Faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an Atheist, I should now have been convinced of the Being and Government of a Deity! It is he who abases the Proud and favours the Humble. May we never forget his Goodness to us, and may our future Conduct manifest our Gratitude.

But let us leave these serious Reflections and converse with our usual Pleasantry. I remember your observing once to me as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two Journeymen Printers, within your Knowledge, had met with such Success in the World as ourselves. You were then at the head of your Profession, and soon afterwards became a Member of Parliament. I was an Agent for a few Provinces, and now act for them all. But we have risen by different Modes. I, as a Republican Printer, always liked a Form well *plain'd down*; being averse to those *overbearing* Letters that

hold their Heads so *high*, as to hinder their Neighbours from appearing. You, as a Monarchist, chose to work upon *Crown* Paper, and found it profitable; while I work'd upon *pro patria* (often indeed call'd *Fools Cap*) with no less advantage. Both our *Heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's Work of it. With regard to Public Affairs (to continue in the same stile), it seems to me that the Compositors in your Chapel do not *cast off their Copy* well, nor perfectly understand *Imposing*; their *Forms*, too, are continually pester'd by the *Outs* and *Doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *Faces*, and particularly certain *Head-pieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, Courage! The Business may still flourish with good Management; and the Master become as rich as any of the Company.

By the way, the rapid Growth and extension of the English language in America, must become greatly Advantageous to the booksellers, and holders of Copy-Rights in England. A vast audience is assembling there for English Authors, ancient, present, and future, our People doubling every twenty Years; and this will demand large and of course profitable Impressions of your most valuable Books. I would, therefore, if I possessed such rights, entail them, if such a thing be practicable, upon my Posterity; for their Worth will be continually augmenting. This may look a little like Advice, and yet I have drank no *Madeira* these Ten Months.

The Subject, however, leads me to another Thought, which is, that you do wrong to discourage the Emigration of Englishmen to America. In my piece on Population, I have proved, I think, that Emigration does not diminish but multiplies a Nation. You will not have fewer at home for

those that go Abroad; and as every Man who comes among us, and takes up a piece of Land, becomes a Citizen, and by our Constitution has a Voice in Elections, and a share in the Government of the Country, why should you be against acquiring by this fair Means a Repossession of it, and leave it to be taken by Foreigners of all Nations and Languages, who by their Numbers may drown and stifle the English, which otherwise would probably become in the course of two Centuries the most extensive Language in the World, the Spanish only excepted? It is a Fact, that the Irish emigrants and their children are now in Possession of the Government of Pennsylvania, by their Majority in the Assembly, as well as of a great Part of the Territory; and I remember well the first Ship that brought any of them over. I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1527. TO GEORGE WHATLEY (L. C.)

Passy, Aug^t 21, 1784.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of May 3d, 1783. I am ashamed that it has been so long unanswered. The Indolence of Old Age, frequent Indisposition, and too much Business are my only Excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your Welfare.

Your excellent little Work, *The Principles of Trade*, is too little known. I wish you would send me a Copy of it by the Return of my Grandson and Secretary, whom I beg leave to Recommend to your Civilities. I would get it translated and printed here. And if your Bookseller has any quantity

of them left, I should be glad he would send them to America. The Ideas of our People there, tho' rather better than those that prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be; and that Piece might be of service among them.

Since and soon after the Date of your letter, we lost unaccountably, as well as unfortunately, that worthy, valuable young Man you mention, your namesake, Maddison. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favorite Charity¹ does not go on as you could wish it. It is shrunk indeed by your admitting only 60 children a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your Children in England, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of Emigration. A Subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist Mothers in Nursing their Infants themselves at home; the Practice of sending them to the *Enfants trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous Excess, as, by the annual Bill, it appears they amount to near one Third of the Children born in Paris! The Subscription is likely to succeed, and may do a great deal of good, tho' it cannot answer all the purposes of a Foundling Hospital.

Your Eyes must continue very good, since you can write so small a Hand without Spectacles. I cannot distinguish a Letter even of Large Print; but am happy in the invention of Double Spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my Eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other Defects and Infirmities were as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while for Friends to live a good deal longer, but I look upon Death to be as necessary

¹ The Foundling Hospital, of which Mr. Whatley was the Treasurer.—ED.

to our Constitution as Sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the Morning. Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. F[RANKLIN].

1528. TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (L. C.)

Passy, Aug^t 21, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

Understanding that my Letter intended for you by General Melvill,¹ was lost at the Hôtel d'Espagne, I take this Opportunity by my Grandson to give you the purport of it, as well as I can recollect. I thank'd you for the Pleasure you had procured me of the General's Conversation, whom I found a judicious, sensible, and amiable Man. I was glad to hear that you possess'd a comfortable Retirement, and more so that you had Thoughts of removing to Philadelphia, for that it would make me very happy to have you there. Your *Companions* would be very acceptable to the Library, but I hoped you would long live to enjoy their Company yourself. I agreed with you in Sentiments concerning the Old Testament, and thought the Clause in our Constitution, which required the Members of Assembly to declare their belief, *that the whole of it was given by divine Inspiration*, had better have been omitted. That I had opposed the Clause; but, being overpower'd by Numbers, and fearing more might in future Times be grafted on it, I prevailed to have the additional Clause, "*that no further or more extended Profession of Faith should ever be exacted.*" I observ'd to you too, that

¹ Robert Melville (1723-1809), general and antiquary, inventor of the "Carronades." — ED.

the Evil of it was the less, as *no Inhabitant*, nor any Officer of Government, except the Members of Assembly, were oblig'd to make that Declaration.

So much for that Letter; to which I may now add, that there are several Things in the Old Testament, impossible to be given by *divine* Inspiration; such as the Approbation ascribed to the Angel of the Lord, of that abominably wicked and detestable Action of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite.¹ If the rest of the Book were like that, I should rather suppose it given by Inspiration from another Quarter, and renounce the whole.

By the way, how goes on the Unitarian Church in Essex Street? And the honest Minister of it,² is he comfortably supported? Your old Colleague, Mr. Radcliff, is he living? And what became of Mr. Denham?

My Grandson, who will have the honour of delivering this to you, may bring me a Line from you; and I hope will bring me an Account of your continuing well and happy.

I jog on still, with as much Health, and as few of the Infirmities of old Age, as I have any Reason to expect. But whatever is impair'd in my Constitution, my Regard for my old Friends remains firm and entire. You will always have a good Share of it, for I am ever with great and sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Judges, chap. iv.

² Theophilus Lindsey (1723–1808), named after Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, his godfather. His friends built for him the chapel in Essex Street, opened in March, 1778. He published in 1784 "*Vindiciæ Priestleyanæ*." — ED.

1529. TO WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Passy, Aug^t 25. 1784. Wednesday.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Nothing very material has happen'd since you left us. The D. of Dorset call'd yesterday, and enquir'd if I had heard from you, supposing you had been gone a Week. Mr. Adams & Family, Mad^e Dandelot and other Friends have visited me; & Mad^e Saurin who is return'd from England. We din'd with her yesterday. She says Made. D'hauteville will be glad to see you in England, wishes you would call upon her, and has given me her Address, which I enclose. We dine, Ben & I, today with M. de Chaumont, & Saturday with Mr. Adáms.

The Report ¹ is publish'd and makes a great deal of Talk. Everybody agrees that it is well written; but many wonder at the Force of Imagination describ'd in it, as occasioning Convulsions &c. and some fear that Consequences may be drawn from it by Infidels to weaken our Faith in some of the Miracles of the New Testament. I send you two more Copies. You would do well to give one to the French Ambassador, if he has not had it. Some think it will put an End to Mesmerism. But there is a wonderful deal of Credulity in the World, and Deceptions as absurd, have supported themselves for Ages.

I send you a few more Letters, and am

Your affectionate Grandfather,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Mrs. Holt, Printer to the State in New York, is

¹ Report of the Commission for the investigation of Mesmerism. — ED.

punctual since her Husband's Death, in sending me News Papers by every Packet. At the Entrance of the Exchange is a little shop where they sell all the London's Newspapers. I would have you buy a few of the latest and send to her, and let her know it is by my Order. You will find a Bag up in the New York Coffee-House, in which you can put the Packet directed to her.

1530. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES¹

SIR,

Passy, September 3, 1784.

I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency, by order of Congress, a resolution of theirs, dated the 11th of May last, which is in the words following, viz.

“*Resolved*, That Dr. Franklin be instructed to express to the court of France, the constant desire of Congress to meet their wishes; that these States are about to form a general system of commerce, by treaties with other nations; that, at this time, they cannot foresee what claim might be given to those nations by the explanatory propositions from the Count de Vergennes, on the second and third articles of our Treaty of Amity and Commerce with His Most Christian Majesty, but that he may be assured it will be our constant care to place no people on more advantageous ground than the subjects of his Majesty.”

With great respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1531. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (L. C.)

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Passy, Sept. 7, 1784.

This will be delivered to you by Count Mirabeau;² son of the Marquis of that name, Author of *L'Ami des Hommes*.

¹ From “Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence” (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 516. — ED.

² The same who afterwards so eminently distinguished himself by his eloquence in the early part of the French Revolution. — W. T. F.

This Gentleman is esteemed here, and I recommend him to your Civilities and Counsels, particularly with respect to the Printing of a Piece he has written on the subject of *hereditary Nobility*, on occasion of the Order of Cincinnati lately attempted to be established in America, which cannot be printed here. I find that some of the best Judges think it extremely well written, with great Clearness, Force, and Elegance. If you can recommend him to an honest, reasonable Bookseller, that will undertake it, you will do him Service, and perhaps some to Mankind, who are too much bigotted in many Countries to that kind of imposition.

I had formerly almost resolved to trouble you with no more letters of Recommendation; but I think you will find this Gentleman to possess Talents, that may render his acquaintance agreeable. With sincere Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1532. TO W. T. FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Passy, Sept. 8. 1784.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have receiv'd no Line from you since that from Dover. I continue as well as when you left me. M. le Veillard is much better but still weak and cannot yet go abroad. The rest of our Friends are well, and often enquire after you. I intended to have sent you some more Letters; but my Time has been all devour'd by Business and Visitors. The inclos'd Pacquet is from M. le Veillard. I have promis'd him that you will take care of it and deliver it immediately. It contains two Letters of Recommendation w^{ch} I have given

the Count ¹ at M. V's Request, one to Dr. Price, the other to our Friend Vaughan. If it should be in your way to show him any Civilities, I would have you do it. He is a Man of Talents, and his Father was obliging to me when I was formerly in France. I have three Invitations to dine out to-day, with Madames Brillon, Helvetius, and M. de Chaumont. But it is so excessively hot, that I shall stay at home. We proceed gently with our Business. The Newspapers begin to come from Dover, so I would have you stop & pay off the others. Thank Mr. Thomson in my Behalf when you return. I am ever

Your affectionate Grandfather

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Mesmer has complain'd to the Parliament of our Report, and requested that they would appoint Commissioners, to whom he might submit the Examination of—not his Theory and Practice, but — un *Plan* qui renfermera les seuls moyens possibles de constater infailliblement l'existence & l'utilité de sa decouverte. The Petition was printed. Many thought the Parliament would do nothing in it. But they have laid hold of it to clinch Mesmer, and oblige him to expose all directly. So that it must soon be seen whether there is any difference between his Art & Desler's. Voici leur

[Arret du 6 7^{bre} 1784.]

La Cour ordonne qui par devant quatre Docteurs de la Faculté de Medecine, deux Chirurgiens, & deux Maitres en Pharmacie, Mesmer *sera tenu* d'exposer la Doctrine dont il annonce avoir fait la Decouverte & les procedés qu'il pretend devoir etre suivis & pratiqués pour en faire Le Application;

¹ Count Mirabeau, see preceding letter. — ED.

dont sera dressé Procès verbal, pour celui communiqué à M. le Procureur General, et rapporté en la Cour être ordonné ce qu'il appartriendra.

1533. TO AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT (L. C.)

Passy ce 12 Septembre, 1784

J'AI reçu Monsieur, la Lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 8 de ce Mois. Je suis bien sensible à l'Intéret que vous voulez bien prendre à ma Santé, et je vous suis infiniment obligé ainsi qu'à M. Dubourg; de la Communication de votre Remède contre la Pierres et la Gravelle. Ma Maladie ayant été [] supportable j'usqu'à ce Jour, Je ne suis point encore déterminé à faire usage d'aucun Médicament. Si le Mal augmentoit par la suite et que Je me visse obligé d'avoir recours à votre Recette, Je me ferai un Devoir de vous faire part du Succès. Agréez, Je vous prie, mes sinceres Remercimens et les Sentiment d'estime et de Reconnoissance avec les quels J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

Votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur.

B. FRANKLIN.

1534. TO W. T. FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Passy, Sept. 13, 1784.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I received last Night yours of the 7th & am glad to hear you are quit of your Fever. You are well advis'd to continue taking the Bark. There is an English Proverb that says,

An Ounce of Prevention is worth a Pound of Cure. It is particularly true with regard to the Bark and an Intermit- tent. —

I consent to your going with your Father, and to your Stay in England until the Middle of October.

Don't omit writing to me by every Post. The uncertain State of your Health makes me more anxious to hear from you.

I wrote to you that I had not suffer'd by going in a Carriage to Auteuil. I afterwards had reason to think otherwise, tho' it was not much. It has however discourag'd my repeating the Experiment. The Swedish Ambassador has press'd me much to dine this day with him & Prince Henry, but I thought myself oblig'd to refuse him. I walk'd however to Auteuil on Saturday to dine with Mr. A.¹ &c. with whom I go on comfortably. —

I have procur'd a *Sauf Conduit* for B. and he leaves us to-morrow. Mr. W^s will supply his Place.

Your Room-Floor was all taken up, the Timbers being found so rotten that one might crumble them between the Fingers. New ones are laid in Mortar, and the whole left open to dry before the Boards are replac'd. As your Stay will be longer, we may give more time for the Drying, to prevent your being incommoded with any remaining Dampness.

Get me a Book called *Miscellanies* by Daines Barrington, Esq^r.²

Give my Love to your Father.

Remember me affectionately to all enquiring Friends.

I am your loving Grandfather

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ John Adams. — ED.

² Daines Barrington (1727-1800), "Miscellanies" (1781). — ED.

M & Mad^m Brillon with whom I am to Breakfast this Morning, have charg'd me with mille choses to say to you on their Behalf. Ben sends his Love, & his Duty to his Uncle.

M^r le Veillard still continues low & weak.

1535. TO W. T. FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Passy, Oct. 2. 1784

DEAR GRANDSON,

I have not receiv'd a Line from you since that of Sept. 7. now near a Month.¹ I have waited with impatience the Arrival of every Post. — But not a Word. — All your Acquaintance are continually enquiring what News from you. — I have none. Judge what I must feel, what they must think, and tell me what I am to think of such Neglect. I must suppose it Neglect: for if your Fever had return'd, and you were unable to write, surely your Father, or somebody would have inform'd me of it. — I shall continue however till this Conduct of yours is clear'd up, hoping it may be explain'd to my Satisfaction,

Your affectionate Grandfather

B. F.

1536. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (A. P. S.)

Passy, Oct. 11, 1784

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the honour of yours of the 25th past,² and shall communicate it as you desire to my Colleagues

¹ A letter from W. T. Franklin, dated September 26, 1784, is in A. P. S. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

tomorrow. I think you did right in Mentioning to the Minister the Nature of our Commission &c. In my last I sent you a Copy of our Letter to the Count d'Aranda, herein I inclose his Answer, in order to keep you fully inform'd of what passes in the Negociation. The Reply has not yet been made, as soon as it is, you shall have that likewise. I am glad to learn that M^r Gardoqui¹ is sent to America. I write in much Pain, and cannot now add but that I am ever, with sincere Esteem and affection,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Oct. 15. 1784.

Since writing the within, I have been acquainted that M^r James Hartwell² of Salem in New England, being at S^t Sebastian with a Cargo of Tobacco, & occasionally going from thence to Bilbao, was seized in the latter Place by the officers of the Inquisition, some Months since, and convey'd to Logrone, being charged with having three or four years ago embrac'd the Catholic Religion and afterwards quitting it. They have also it seems taken Possession of his Tobacco. And it is but lately, that his Friends of Bordeaux from whence he went to meet his Cargo in Spain, have heard of his Misfortune. There are some Americans of Distinction here that know him, who say he is of a good Family, and bears a good Character, but is sometimes a little disordered in his

¹ M. Gardoqui, formerly consul-general in England, was appointed *Chargé d'affaires* to the United States with the commission of Minister. — ED.

² See letter to Carmichael, March 22, 1785, and letter to Jonathan Williams, April 13, 1785. — ED.

Mind; and they are exceedingly concern'd at his Situation, and anxious that his Release should be obtained. My Colleagues M^r Adams and M^r Jefferson join with me in stating this Matter to you, and Requesting that you would immediately take the proper Steps for Reclaiming him as a Subject of the United States, and procuring an order for his Liberty and the Restitution of his Property. This Conduct of the Holy office, if not rectified, may be attended with bad Consequences to the Commerce & Friendly Correspondence that ought to be cultivated between the two Nations. —

Yours as ever

B. FRANKLIN.

1537. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

Passy, October 16, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

It was intended by the Commissioners to write a joint letter to Congress, but I am afraid the opportunity may be missed. This may serve to inform you, that propositions of treating have been made by us to all the powers of Europe according to our instructions, and we are waiting for their answers. There are apprehensions here of a war between the Emperor and Holland; but, as the season is not proper for opening a campaign, I hope the winter will give time for mediators to accommodate matters. We have not yet heard that Mr. Jay has accepted the secretaryship of foreign affairs. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ From "Diplomatic Revolutionary Correspondence" (Sparks), Vol. II, p. 518. — ED.

1538. TO W. T. FRANKLIN (A. P. S.)

Passy, Oct. 18. 1784.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I received yours of the 5th (just after I had sent away mine of the 2nd). It inclosed one from the good Bishop to you. I have since receiv'd yours of the 12th. I am glad to hear that M^{rs} Hewson resolves to come. My Love to her and her Children. I consent to your Staying till the End of the Month, on Condition however of your making a Visit to Chilbolton and bringing me Word of the Welfare of that dear Family.¹ M. le Veillard mends, but slowly. Our other Friends are well. We have had a Visit from the Count d'Oeills. My Love to M^r & M^{rs} Sargent, &c. — I have lately seen in the English Papers an Advertisement of Cast Iron Tiles for Covering Houses. I wish you would bring me one as a Sample with the Price, which if I like I shall take enough to cover my House at Philadelphia, and may introduce the Use of them there. Your last is the 7th that I have receiv'd from you of the 10 you mention to have written. I am very well at present but have had some bad Turns lately. I am ever

Your affectionate Grandfather

B. FRANKLIN.

I am charg'd by several of our
Friends to say mille choses, to you for them.

¹ Chilbolton was the home of Jonathan Shipley, "the good Bishop" of St. Asaph. — ED.

1539. TO CHARLES THOMSON (D. S. W.)

Passy, November 11, 1784.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter of August 13 with the papers annexed, relative to the affair of Longchamps. I hope Satisfaction will be given to M. Marbois. The Commissioners have written a joint Letter to Congress. This serves to cover a few papers relative to matters with which I was particularly charged in the Instructions. I shall write to you fully by the next Opportunity, having now only time to add, that I am, as ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I executed the Instructions of October 29, 1783, as soon as I knew the Commissions for treating with the Emperor, &c. were issued, which was not till July, 1784. The three Letters between the Emperor's Minister and me are what passed on that Occasion.

1540. TO RICHARD BACHE (B. M.)

Passy, Nov. 11. 1784

I RECEIVED your Letters of the 28th of August, and 10th of September, with the newspapers by M. Saily, but they were very incompleat and broken Sets, many being omitted perhaps the most material, which is disagreeable to me who wish to be well inform'd of what is doing among you. I was glad to receive the good Account B & S have given of their good Treatment of those trifling Correspondents. Your

Family having pass'd well thro' the Summer gives me great pleasure. I still hope to see them before I die. Benny continues well, and grows amazingly. He is a very sensible and a very good Lad, and I love him much. I had Thoughts of bringing him up under his Cousin, and fitting him for Public Business, thinking he might be of Service hereafter to his Country; but being now convinc'd that *Service is no Inheritance*, as the Proverb says, I have determin'd to give him a Trade that he may have something to depend on, and not be oblig'd to ask Favours or Offices of anybody. And I flatter myself he will make his way good in the World with God's Blessing. He has already begun to learn the business from Masters who come to my House,¹ and is very diligent in working and quick in learning. He will write by this Opportunity.

I can say nothing certain with respect to my Return at present. In the Spring I may see clearer. My Malady tho' it does not permit my using a Carriage, is otherwise tolerable. I enjoy the Company of my Friends, and pass my time as well as can be expected for an Exile. My love to Sally and the Children, from

Your Affectionate Father

B. FRANKLIN.

1541. TO MESSRS. WITAL AND PAUCHE² (A. P. S.)

GENTLEMEN

Passy, Nov. 15. 1784

I have attentively considered your Project communicated to me in yours of the 24th past, & of which you desire my Opinion.

¹ A printer and a letter-founder.—F.

² Booksellers in Neufchatel. Their letter, dated October 24, 1784, is in A. P. S.—ED,

I have some Doubts whether you will find your Bookselling and Printing Business sufficiently profitable at first for the Support of three Families, because the French Language in which I suppose your Books chiefly are, is not yet much extended in North America. It is however since the Alliance with France daily increasing, Schools being established in all the great Towns for teaching it. But if you can add to the Sale of Books the different Manufactures of your Country, and settle such Correspondences before you leave it as may keep you constantly supply'd with them, it is possible the Gains may be very considerable.

I inclose a little Pamphlet which will give you some Information respecting our Country, and if I can be of any Service to you there it will be a Pleasure to,

Gentlemen,

Your &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1542. TO DR. BRAV¹ (A. P. S.)

à Passy ce 22 Nov.^{re} '84.

JE suis trop étranger, Monsieur, à toute dispute sur le Mesmérisme pour consentir que mon nom paroisse ni directe-

¹ In answer to the following letter: —

Paris, le 21 Novembre 1784.

Vous prévoiez, Monsieur, que je vais non pas vous engager à la vengeance (elle est au-dessous de vous) mais à me permettre de faire connaître sous vos auspices l'orateur Mesmérien, en disant au public ébranlé par moi, mais désabusé par vous à peu près ce qui sait :

“Puisque Mesmer ne se donne pas la peine d'écrire lui même ses sottises, le sage Bostonien a le même droit, avec cette différence que Mesmer paye très cher l'encre et qu'on la donne cette encore à M^r. Franklin sans intérêt sans

ment ni indirectement ailleurs que dans le Rapport des Commissaires au nombre desquels la Majesté m'avoit nommé. J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur,

Votre très humble et très
obéissant serviteur

B. FRANKLIN.

1543. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON (A. P. S.)

Passy, Nov. 23, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

These People are so accustomed to see every thing done by sollicitation of Interest, or what they call Protection, and nothing without it, that they hardly conceive it possible to obtain the Payment even of a just Debt, but by means of Persons whom they suppose to have Influence enough to support and enforce their Pretensions. We should naturally suppose, that the proper time for asking such Aid would be after a regular Demand, and a Refusal of Justice; but they run about to everybody with their Memorials, before they have even presented their Account to those whom they consider as their Debtors. Thus the Creditors, not only of a State in America, but even of private Merchants, teize the Ministers of this Country, as well as those of America here, with their Petitions and Cases, requesting Assistance and

espoir de salaire, d'aussi bon cœur que l'estime et la vénération dont il est si digne."

.

(signed) Brav

Etud-Med^{lre}

Chez M. Joliot, Medecin, rue des
Lions St. Paul à Paris. — ED.

Interest to procure attention to their Affairs, when it does not appear that their Claims have been refused, or even made where they ought to be made.

I beg leave to refer to you the enclosed Papers, and to request, that, if you are acquainted with the Affair, and can give any comfortable Expectation or Counsel to the poor Man, you would be so good as to furnish me with it, that I may communicate it to him in my Answer. With great and sincere Esteem, I am, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient
& most humble Servant

_____ B. FRANKLIN.

1544. TO. —

1784.

I AM glad to hear that your family are safely arrived in London, and that you propose to bring them here with you. Your life will be more comfortable.

I thank you much for the translation of the Abbé de Mably's letters. The French edition is not yet published here. I have as yet only had time to run over the translator's preface, which seems well written. I imagine Mr. Snowden to be a Presbyterian minister, as I formerly corresponded with one of that name in Holland, who, I suppose, might be his father. I have not seen the piece you mention of a Berlin academician. I should not object to his enjoyment of the discovery he has made, that despotism in the best possible form of government, by his living under it as long as he pleases. For I admire the decision of his prince in a similar case of a dispute among his clergy concerning the duration of hell torments. With great respect, I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1545. TO SAMUEL JACKSON PRATT¹

Passy [no date, circa 1784].

SIR:— I should have been flattered exceedingly by Mrs. Melmoth's showing the least inclination for one of those portraits,² when Mrs. Izard accepted the other, and should have presented it to her with the greatest pleasure. She did not appear to desire it, and I did not presume it of value enough to be offered. Her quarrel with me on that account is pleasing. The reconciliation, when I can obtain it, will be more so. At present another lady has put it out of my power to comply with the terms. M. de Chaumont, at whose pottery in the country they were made, receiving a request from Petersburg for one of them, to gratify the curiosity of the Empress, and having none in town, he got from me the only one I had left, and has sent it away. But I am promised another soon, and shall seize the first moment of making my peace with it. In the meantime, I hope you will intercede for me, in that heart where I am sure you have interest. Accept my thanks for the books, from the reading of which I promise myself a good deal of pleasure. Please to accept also the trifle inclosed, and believe me with most sincere esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 72. Samuel Jackson Pratt (1749–1814) was a book writer whose hireling pen seems to have been of some service to Franklin. He wrote under the pen name of Courtney Melmoth. — ED.

² By Nini. — ED.

1546. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹

Passy, January 3, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of December 1st, from Bath. I am glad to hear that your good sister is in a fair way towards recovery; my respects and best wishes attend her.

I communicated your letter to Mr. Jefferson, to remind him of his promise to communicate to you the intelligence he might receive from America on the subjects you mention; and now, having got back, I shall endeavour to answer the other parts of it.

What you propose to draw up of your opinions on American negociation, may be of great use, if laid, as you intend, before administration, in case they seriously intend to enter on it after the meeting of Parliament; for I know your ideas all tend to a good understanding between the two countries and their common advantage; and in my mind, too, all selfish projects of partial profit are the effects of short-sightedness, they never producing permanent benefits, and are at length the causes of discord and its consequences, wherein much more is spent than all the temporary gains amounted to.

I do not know that any one is yet appointed by your court to treat with us. We some time since acquainted your minister with our powers and disposition to treat, which he communicated to his court, and received for answer, that his Majesty's ministers were ready to receive any propositions we might have to make for the common benefit of both coun-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin," 1818, Vol. II, p. 423. — ED.

tries, but they thought it more for the honour of both, that the treaty should not be in a third place. We answered, that, though we did not see much inconvenience in treating here, we would, as soon as we had finished some affairs at present on our hands, wait upon them, if they pleased, in London. We have since heard nothing.

We have no late accounts from America of any importance. You know the Congress adjourned the beginning of June till the beginning of November. And since their meeting there has been no account of their proceedings. All the stories in your papers relating to their divisions are fiction as well as those of the people being discontented with Congressional government. Mr. Jay writes to me, that they were at no time more happy or more satisfied with their government, than at present, nor ever enjoyed more tranquillity or prosperity. In truth, the freedom of their ports to all nations has brought in a vast plenty of foreign goods, and occasioned a demand for their produce, the consequence of which is the double advantage of buying what they consume cheap, and selling what they can spare dear.

If we should come to London, I hope it may still be with you that we are to do business. Our already understanding one another may save, on many points, a good deal of time in discussion. But I doubt whether any treaty is intended on your part, and I fancy we shall not press it. It may perhaps be best to give both sides time to inquire, and to *feel* for the interests they cannot *see*. With sincere and great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1547. TO RICHARD PRICE¹ (M. H. S.)

Passy, Feb. 1, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received duly your kind letter of Oct. 21,² and another before with some of your excellent pamphlets of Advice to the United States. My last letters from America inform me that every thing goes on well there, that the new elected Congress is met, and consists of very respectable characters with excellent dispositions; and the people in general very happy under their new governments. The last year has been a prosperous one for the country; the crops plentiful and sold at high prices for exportation, while all imported goods, from the great plenty, sold low. This is the happy consequence of our commerce being open to all the world, and no longer a monopoly to Britain. Your papers are full of our divisions and distresses, which have no existence but in the imagination and wishes of English newswriters and their employers.

I sent you sometime since a little piece intitled, Testament de M. Fortuné Ricard,³ which exemplifies strongly and pleasantly your doctrine of the immense powers of compound interest. I hope you receiv'd it. If not, I will send you another. I send herewith a new work of Mr Necker's on the Finances of France. You will find good things in it, particularly his chapter on War. I imagine Abbé Morellet may have sent a copy to Lord Lansdowne. If not, please to communicate it. I think I sent you formerly his Conte rendu.

¹ The original in the possession of Walter Ashburton in England. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

³ By Mathon de la Cour. See letter to Vaughan, April 21, 1785. — ED.

This work makes more talk here than that, tho' that made abundance. I will not say that the writer thinks higher of himself and his abilities than they deserve, but I wish for his own sake that he had kept such sentiments more out of sight.

With unalterable esteem and respect, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1548. TO JOHN JAY

(L. C.)

Passy, Feb. 8, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received by the Marquis de la Fayette your kind Letter of the 13th of December. It gave me Pleasure on two Accounts; as it inform'd me of the public Welfare, and that of your, I may almost say *our* dear little Family; for, since I had the Pleasure of their being with me in the same House, I have ever felt a tender Affection for them, equal I believe to that of most Fathers.

I did hope to have heard by the last Packet of your having accepted the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs, but was disappointed. I write to you now, therefore, only as a private Friend; yet I may mention respecting Public Affairs, that, as far as I can perceive, the good Disposition of this Court towards us continues. I wish I could say as much for the rest of the European Courts. I think that their desire of being connected with us by Treaties is of late much abated; and this I suppose occasioned by the Pains Britain takes to represent us everywhere as distracted with Divisions, discontented with our Governments, the People unwilling to pay Taxes, the

Congress unable to collect them, and many desiring the Restoration of the old Government, etc. The English Papers are full of this Stuff, and their Ministers get it copied into the foreign Papers. The moving about of the Congress from Place to Place has also a bad Effect, in giving Colour to the Reports of their being afraid of the People. I hope they will soon settle somewhere, and, by the Steadiness and Wisdom of their Measures, dissipate all those Mists of Misrepresentation raised by the remaining Malice of ancient Enemies, and establish our Reputation for national Justice and Prudence as they have done for Courage and Perseverance.

It grieves me that we have not been able to discharge our first Year's Payment of Interest to this Court, due the beginning of last Month. I hope it will be the only failure, and that effectual Measures will be taken to be exactly punctual hereafter. *The good Paymaster, says the Proverb, is Lord of another man's Purse.* The bad one, if he ever has again Occasion to borrow, must pay dearly for his Carelessness and Injustice.

You are happy in having got back safe to your Country. I should be less unhappy, if I could imagine the Delay of my *Congé* useful to the States, or in the least degree necessary. But they have many equally capable of doing all I have to do here. The new propos'd Treaties are the most important Things; but two can go thro' with them as well as three, if indeed any are likely to be compleated, which I begin to doubt, since the new ones make little Progress, and the old ones, which wanted only the *Fiat* of Congress, seem now to be going rather backward; I mean those I had projected with Denmark and Portugal.

My Grandsons are sensible of the honour of your remem-

brance, and present their Respects to you and Mrs. Jay. I add my best wishes of Health and Happiness to you all, being with sincere Esteem and Affection, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

1549. TO RICHARD HENRY LEE ¹

Passy, February 8, 1785.

SIR,

I received by the Marquis de Lafayette the two letters you did me the honour of writing to me the 11th and 14th of December; the one enclosing a letter from Congress to the King, the other a resolve of Congress respecting the convention for establishing consuls. The letter was immediately delivered and well received. The resolve came too late to suspend signing the convention, it having been done July last, and a copy sent so long since, that we now expected the ratification. As that copy seems to have miscarried I now send another.

I am not informed what objection has arisen in Congress to the plan sent me. Mr. Jefferson thinks it may have been to the part which restrained the consuls from all concern in commerce. That article was omitted, being thought unnecessary to be stipulated, since either party would always have the power of imposing such restraints on its own officers, whenever it should think fit. I am, however, of opinion that this or any other reasonable article or alteration may be obtained at the desire of Congress, and established by a supplement.

¹ President of Congress. — ED.

Permit me, Sir, to congratulate you on your being called to the high honour of presiding in our national councils, and to wish you every felicity, being with the most perfect esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1550. TO COMTE DE WINDISCH-GRÄTZ (A. P. S.)

Passy, le 22 Fev^r 1785

J'AI reçu Monsieur, la Lettre infinément honnête dont vous m'avez honore le 9 de ce Mois, et Je ne puis qu' approuver l'Ecrit qui y etait joint: il ne pourra manquer d'être utile. Je m'empresserai de faire passer en Amerique suivant votre Desir les Exemplaires que vous m'annoncez dès qu'ils me seront parvenus, car jusqu'a present je n'ai reçu que celui qui etait joint à votre Lettre, et pour le quil je vous prie de recevois mes sinceres Remerciements.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec une respectueuse Consideration,
M. . . . votre

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1551. TO WILLIAM STRAHAN¹

Passy, March 5, 1785

DEAR FRIEND:—I received your kind letter by my grandson. I thank you for the civilities you showed him when in London.

I hope to get home this ensuing summer. I shall have an

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 79.—ED.

old account to settle then with the family of our friend Hall. There is a particular article of some importance, about which we were not agreed, but were to be determined by your opinion. It was the value of a copyright in an established newspaper, of each of which from eight to ten thousand were printed. My long absence from that country, and immense employment the little time I was there, have hitherto prevented the settlement of all the accounts that had been between us; though we never differed about them, and never should if that good honest man had continued in being. To prevent all dispute on the above points with his son, it is that I now request your decision, which I doubt not will be satisfactory to us both. With unchangeable esteem, I am ever, my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

My respects to Mrs. Strahan.

1552. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (L. C.)

ON THE CRIMINAL LAWS AND THE PRACTICE OF PRIVATEERING ¹

Passy, March 14, 1785.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Among the Pamphlets you lately sent me was one intitled

¹ "The following paper was written in the form of a letter to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, and dated at Passy, March 14th, 1785. It first appeared anonymously in a small volume published by Sir Samuel Romilly, in the year 1786, being OBSERVATIONS on a treatise by Dr. Madan, entitled *Thoughts on Executive Justice*. The letter contains remarks on the same publication. It was communicated by Mr. Vaughan to Sir Samuel Romilly, who printed it

"Thoughts on Executive Justice." ¹ In return for that, I send you a French one on the same Subject, *Observations concernant l'Exécution de l'Article II. de la Déclaration sur le Vol*. They are both address'd to the Judges, but written, as you will see, in a very different Spirit. The English Author is for hanging *all* Thieves. The Frenchman is for proportioning Punishments to Offences.

If we really believe, as we profess to believe, that the Law of Moses was the Law of God, the Dictate of divine Wisdom, infinitely superior to human; on what Principles do we ordain Death as the Punishment of an Offence, which, according to that Law, was only to be punish'd by a Restitution of Fourfold? To put a man to Death for an Offence which does not deserve Death, is it not Murder? And, as the French Writer says, *Doit-on punir un délit contre la société par un crime contre la nature?* ²

at the end of his OBSERVATIONS, under the title of *A Letter from a Gentleman abroad to his Friend in England*, and prefixed to it an explanatory advertisement.

" 'The writer of the foregoing *Observations*,' says he, 'having been favoured with a copy of the following letter by a friend of his, to whom it was addressed, thought he should render a very acceptable service to the public by printing it. At the same time he cannot but feel it incumbent on him to make some apology for publishing it in the form of an *Appendix* to a work, which it very far surpasses in every kind of merit. The truth is, he was not at liberty to print it any other manner. The simplicity of style and liberality of thought, which distinguish it, cannot fail of discovering its venerable author to such as are already acquainted with his valuable writings. To those, who have not that good fortune, the editor is not permitted to say more, than that it is the production of one of the best and most eminent men of the present age.'

"This testimony is valuable from such a man as Sir Samuel Romilly. And indeed the letter may well be classed among the best of the author's writings, whether regarded as to the vigor and clearness of the style, the benign spirit it breathes, or its bold defence of the rights of humanity and justice."—S.

¹ See letter to Le Veillard, April 15, 1787. — ED.

² "Ought an offence against society to be punished by a crime against nature?"

Superfluous Property is the Creature of Society. Simple and mild Laws were sufficient to guard the Property that was merely necessary. The Savage's Bow, his Hatchet, and his Coat of Skins, were sufficiently secured, without Law, by the Fear of personal Resentment and Retaliation. When, by virtue of the first Laws, Part of the Society accumulated Wealth and grew powerful, they enacted others more severe, and would protect their Property at the Expence of Humanity. This was abusing their Power, and commencing a Tyranny. If a Savage, before he enter'd into Society, had been told, "Your Neighbour by this Means may become Owner of 100 deer; but if your Brother, or your Son, or yourself, having no Deer of your own, and being hungry, should kill one, an infamous Death must be the consequence;" he would probably have preferr'd his Liberty, and his common Right of killing any Deer, to all the Advantages of Society that might be propos'd to him.

That it is better 100 guilty Persons should escape than that one innocent Person should suffer, is a Maxim that has been long and generally approved; never, that I know of, controverted. Even the sanguinary Author of the "*Thoughts*" agrees to it, Page 163, adding well, "that the very Thought of *injured* Innocence, and much more that of *suffering* Innocence, must awaken all our tenderest and most compassionate Feelings, and at the same time raise our highest Indignation against the Instruments of it. But," he adds, "there is no danger of *either*, from a strict Adherence to the Laws." Really! Is it then impossible to make an unjust Law? and if the Law itself be unjust, may it not be the very "Instrument" which ought to "raise the Author's and everybody's highest Indignation"? I see, in the last News-

paper from London, that a Woman is capitally convicted at the Old Bailey, for privately stealing out of a Shop some Gauze, value 14 Shillings and threepence; is there any Proportion between the Injury done by a Theft, value 14/3, and the Punishment of a human Creature, by Death, on a Gibbet? Might not that Woman, by her Labour, have made the Reparation ordain'd by God, in paying fourfold? Is not all Punishment inflicted beyond the Merit of the Offence, so much Punishment of Innocence? In this light, how vast is the annual Quantity of not only *injured*, but *suffering* Innocence, in almost all the civilized states of Europe!

But it seems to have been thought, that this kind of Innocence may be punished by way of *preventing* Crimes. I have read, indeed, of a cruel Turk in Barbary, who, whenever he bought a new Christian Slave, ordered him immediately to be hung up by the Legs, and to receive an 100 Blows of a Cudgel on the Soles of his Feet, that the severe Sense of the Punishment, and Fear of incurring it thereafter, might prevent the Faults that should merit it. Our Author himself would hardly approve entirely of this Turk's Conduct in the Government of Slaves; and yet he appears to recommend something like it for the government of English Subjects, when he applauds the Reply of Judge Burnet to the convict Horse-stealer, who, being ask'd what he had to say why Judgment of Death should not pass against him, and answering, that it was hard to hang a Man for *only* stealing a Horse, was told by the judge, "Man, thou art not to be hang'd *only* for stealing, but that Horses may not be stolen."

The man's Answer, if candidly examined, will I imagine appear reasonable, as founded on the Eternal Principle of

Justice and Equity, that Punishments should be proportion'd to Offences; and the judge's Reply brutal and unreasonable, tho' the Writer "wishes all Judges to carry it with them whenever they go the Circuit, and to bear it in their Minds as containing a wise Reason for all the penal Statutes, which they are called upon to put in Execution. It at once illustrates," says he, "the true Grounds and Reasons of *all capital Punishments* whatsoever, namely, that every man's Property, *as well as his Life*, may be held sacred and inviolate." Is there then no difference in Value between Property and Life? If I think it right, that the Crime of Murder should be punished with Death, not only as an equal Punishment of the Crime, but to prevent other Murders, does it follow that I must approve of inflicting the same Punishment for a little Invasion on my *Property* by Theft? If I am not myself so barbarous, so bloody-minded and revengeful, as to kill a Fellow-Creature for stealing from me 14/3, how can I approve of a Law that does it? Montesquieu, who was himself a Judge, endeavours to impress other Maxims. He must have known what humane Judges feel on such occasions, and what the Effect of those Feelings; and, so far from thinking that severe and excessive Punishments prevent Crimes, he asserts, as quoted by our French Writer, that

L'atrocité des loix en empêche l'exécution.

Lorsque la peine est sans mesure, on est souvent obligé de lui préférer l'impunité.

La cause de tous les relâchemens vient de l'impunité des crimes, et non de la modération des peines.

It is said by those who know Europe generally, that there are more Thefts committed and punish'd annually in England, than in all the other Nations put together. If this be so,

there must be a Cause or Causes for such Depravity in your common People. May not one be the Deficiency of Justice and Morality in our national Government, manifested in our oppressive Conduct to Subjects, and unjust wars on our Neighbours? View the long-persisted in, unjust monopolizing Treatment of Ireland at length acknowledged! View the plundering Government exercis'd by your Merchants in the Indies; the confiscating War made upon the American Colonies; and, to say nothing of those upon France and Spain, view the late War upon Holland, which was seen by impartial Europe in no other Light than that of a War of Rapine and Pillage; the Hopes of an immense and easy Prey being its only apparent, and probably its true and real Motive and Encouragement.

Justice is as strictly due between neighbour Nations as between neighbour Citizens. A Highwayman is as much a Robber when he plunders in a Gang, as when single; and a Nation that makes an unjust War, is only a *great Gang*. After employing your People in robbing the Dutch, is it strange, that, being put out of that Employ by the Peace, they should still continue robbing, and rob one another? *Piraterie*, as the French call it, or Privateering, is the universal Bent of the English Nation, at home and abroad, wherever settled. No less than 700 Privateers were, it is said, commissioned in the last War! These were fitted out by Merchants, to prey upon other Merchants, who had never done them any Injury. Is there probably any one of those privateering Merchants of London, who were so ready to rob the Merchants of Amsterdam, that would not readily plunder another London Merchant of the next Street, if he could do it with impunity? The Avidity, the *alieni appetens*, is the same; it is the Fear

alone of the Gallows that makes the difference. How then can a Nation, which, among the honestest of its People, has so many Thieves by Inclination, and whose Government encouraged and commissioned no less than 700 Gangs of Robbers; how can such a Nation have the Face to condemn the Crime in Individuals, and hang up 20 of them in a Morning? It naturally puts one in mind of a Newgate Anecdote. One of the Prisoners complain'd, that in the Night somebody had taken his Buckles out of his Shoes; "What, the Devil!" says another, "have we then *Thieves* among us? It must not be suffered; let us search out the Rogue, and pump him to death."

There is, however, one late Instance of an English Merchant who will not profit by such ill-gotten Gains. He was, it seems, part Owner of a Ship, which the other Owners thought fit to employ as a Letter of Marque, and which took a Number of French Prizes. The Booty being shar'd, he has now an Agent here enquiring, by an Advertisement in the Gazette, for those who suffer'd the Loss, in order to make them, as far as in him lies, Restitution. This conscientious Man is a Quaker. The Scotch Presbyterians were formerly as tender; for there is still extant an Ordinance of the Town-Council of Edinburgh, made soon after the Reformation, "forbidding the purchase of Prize Goods, under Pain of losing the Freedom of the Burgh for ever, with other Punishment at the Will of the Magistrate; the Practice of making Prizes being contrary to good Conscience, and the rule of treating Christian Brethren as we would wish to be treated; and such Goods *are not to be sold by any godly Men within this Burgh.*" The Race of these godly Men in Scotland is probably extinct, or their Principles abandoned; since, as far as that Nation had

a Hand in promoting the War against the Colonies, Prizes and Confiscations are believ'd to have been a considerable Motive.

It has been for some time a generally receiv'd Opinion, that a military Man is not to enquire whether a War be just or unjust; he is to execute his Orders. All Princes who are dispos'd to become Tyrants must probably approve of this Opinion, and be willing to establish it; but is it not a dangerous one? since, on that Principle, if the Tyrant commands his Army to attack and destroy, not only an unoffending Neighbour nation, but even his own Subjects, the Army is bound to obey. A negro Slave, in our Colonies, being commanded by his Master to rob or murder a Neighbour, or do any other immoral Act, may refuse, and the Magistrate will protect him in his Refusal. The Slavery then of a Soldier is worse than that of a Negro! A conscientious Officer, if not restrain'd by the Apprehension of its being imputed to another Cause, may indeed resign, rather than be employ'd in an unjust War; but the private Men are Slaves for Life; and they are perhaps incapable of judging for themselves. We can only lament their Fate, and still more that of a Sailor, who is often dragg'd by Force from his honest Occupation, and compelled to imbrue his Hands in, perhaps, innocent Blood.

But methinks it well behoves Merchants (Men more enlight'ned by their Education, and perfectly free from any such Force or Obligation,) to consider well of the justice of a War, before they voluntarily engage a Gang of Ruffians to attack their Fellow Merchants of a neighbouring Nation, to plunder them of their Property, and perhaps ruin them and their Families, if they yield it; or to wound, maim, or murder them, if they endeavour to defend it. Yet these Things

are done by Christian Merchants, whether a War be just or unjust; and it can hardly be just on both sides. They are done by English and American Merchants, who, nevertheless, complain of private Thefts, and hang by Dozens the Thieves they have taught by their own Example.

It is high time, for the sake of Humanity, that a Stop be put to this Enormity. The United States of America, tho' better situated than any European Nation to make profit by Privateering (most of the Trade of Europe, with the West Indies, passing before their doors), are, as far as in them lies, endeavouring to abolish the Practice, by offering, in all their Treaties with other Powers, an Article, engaging solemnly, that, in Case of future War, no Privateer shall be commission'd on either Side; and that unarm'd Merchant-ships, on both sides, shall pursue their Voyages unmolested.¹ This will be a happy Improvement of the Law of Nations. The Humane and the Just cannot but wish general Success to the Proposition. With unchangeable Esteem and Affection, I am my dear Friend ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ This offer having been accepted by the late King of Prussia, a treaty of amity and commerce was concluded between that monarch and the United States, containing the following humane, philanthropic article; in the formation of which Dr. Franklin, as one of the American plenipotentiaries, was principally concerned, viz.

ART. XXIII.

“ If war should arise between the two contracting parties, the merchants of either country, then residing in the other, shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hindrance; and all women and children, scholars of every faculty, cultivators of the earth, artisans, manufacturers, and fishermen, unarmed and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, and in general all others, whose occupations are for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, shall be allowed to continue their respective employments, and shall not be molested in their persons, nor shall their

1553. TO RICHARD PRICE (L. C.)

Passy, March 18, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

My nephew, Mr. Williams, will have the honour of delivering you this line. It is to request from you a List of a few good Books, to the Value of about Twenty-five Pounds, such as are most proper to inculcate Principles of sound Religion and just Government. A New Town in the State of Massachusetts having done me the honour of naming itself after me, and proposing to build a Steeple to their meeting-house if I would give them a Bell, I have advis'd the sparing themselves the Expence of a Steeple, for the present, and that they would accept of Books instead of a Bell, Sense being preferable to Sound. These are therefore intended as the Commencement of a little Parochial Library for the Use of a Society of intelligent, respectable Farmers, such as our Country People generally consist of. Besides your own Works, I would only mention, on the Recommendation of my sister, "*Stennet's Discourses on Personal Religion*," which may be one Book of the Number, if you know and approve of it.¹

houses and goods be burnt, or otherwise destroyed, nor their fields wasted, by the armed force of the enemy into whose power, by the events of war, they may happen to fall; but, if any thing is necessary to be taken from them for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants and trading vessels employed in exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to be obtained, and more general, shall be allowed to pass free and unmolested; and neither of the contracting powers shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy such trading vessels, or interrupt such commerce." — W. T. F.

¹ Dr. Price complied with this request in a letter dated June 3d, 1785. The books were procured and forwarded to the town of Franklin. The

With the highest Esteem and Respect, I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1554. TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL (A. P. S.)

Passy, March 22, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received duly your Letter of the 27th past, which gave me great Pleasure, as the length of time since I had heard from you made me apprehensive that you might be ill. I immediately communicated the Papers inclosed with it to my Colleagues, Messrs. Adams and Jefferson, and we have had several Meetings on the Barbary Affair. Probably by next Week's Post we may write fully upon it to you, and to Morocco.

I am glad you are likely to succeed in obtaining the Liberty of our silly Countryman.¹ The Discipline they have given

Reverend Nathaniel Emmons, clergyman of the parish for which the library was designed, preached a sermon, in commemoration of this bounty, entitled, "*The Dignity of Man; a Discourse addressed to the Congregation in Franklin upon the Occasion of their receiving from Dr. Franklin the Mark of his Respect in a rich Donation of Books, appropriated to the Use of a Parish Library.*" It was printed in the year 1787, and the following dedication was prefixed to it. "To his Excellency Benjamin Franklin, President of the State of Pennsylvania; the Ornament of Genius, the Patron of Science, and the Boast of Man; this Discourse is inscribed, with the greatest Deference, Humility, and Gratitude, by his obliged and most humble Servant, the Author." The words chosen by the preacher for his text were from the impressive charge of David to Solomon; "*Show thyself a Man.*" He enlarged upon the importance of intellectual and moral culture, pointing out the means, and enforcing the use of them by persuasive arguments. He referred his hearers to the example of Franklin, as affording a pertinent illustration of the text, and encouragement to the hopes of all, who would employ their powers for the attainment of high and useful objects.—S.

¹ See letter to Carmichael, October 11, 1784, and letter to Jonathan Williams, April 13, 1785.—ED.

him is, however, not misapply'd. Mr. Grand being now in Cash, your bills on him for your Salary will be duly honour'd. I mention your drawing on him, because probably I may not be here, as I expect daily the Permission of Congress to return home, and shall embrace the first Opportunity. Wherever I am, be assured of the invariable Esteem and Attachment of, dear Sir, your affectionate friend and humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1555. TO RICHARD HENRY LEE ¹

Passy, April 12, 1785.

SIR,

M. de Chaumont, who will have the honour of presenting this line to your Excellency, is a young gentleman of excellent character, whose father was one of our most early friends in this country, which he manifested by crediting us with a thousand barrels of gunpowder and other military stores in 1776, before we had provided any apparent means of payment. He has, as I understand, some demands to make on Congress, the nature of which I am unacquainted with; but my regard for the family makes me wish, that they may obtain a speedy consideration, and such favourable issue as they may appear to merit.

To this end, I beg leave to recommend him to your countenance and protection, and am, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ President of Congress. — ED.

1556. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (L. C.)

Passy, April 13, 1785

DEAR COUSIN: — I received your letter of December 16th, relating to Jonas Hartwell. I had before written to our minister at Madrid, Mr. Carmichael, requesting him to apply for the release of that man. Enclosed I send his answer, with copies of other papers relating to the affair. The simpleton will be discharged, perhaps after being a little whipped for his folly, and that may not be amiss. We have here another New England man, Thayer,² formerly a candidate for the ministry, who converted himself lately at Rome, and is now preparing a return home for the purpose of converting his countrymen. Our ancestors from Catholic became first Church-of-England men, and then refined into Presbyterians. To change now from Presbyterianism to Popery seems to me refining backwards, from white sugar to brown.

I have written to Dr. Price, of London, requesting him to make a choice of proper books to commence a library for the use of the inhabitants of Franklin. The parcel will be sent directly from thence.

Jonathan and his family are well. He expects to be with

¹ The original letter is in the Maine Historical Society. A letter press copy with P. S. in pencil is in L. C. The letter is addressed to the Senior Jonathan Williams of Boston, father of Jonathan Williams, agent at Nantes. — ED.

² John Thayer (1755 ?–1815), a Protestant clergyman of Boston who joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1783. See “An Account of the Conversion of the Rev. Mr. John Thayer, lately a Protestant Minister at Boston in North America, who embraced the Roman Catholic Religion at Rome, on the 25th of May, 1783, written by himself.” This work was printed in London, reprinted in America, and translated into French, Spanish, and Italian. — ED.

you soon. I continue very hearty and well, except my malady of the stone, which, however, is hitherto very tolerable. My love to cousin Grace, etc., and believe me ever your affectionate uncle.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. April 14th. — I send enclosed a bill drawn by W. Vernon, junior, on his father, for 840 livres, which I request you would receive and deliver to my sister Mecom.

1557. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (L. C.)

Passy, April 21, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of the 23d past, by Mr. Perry,¹ with the other bottle of Blackrie.² I thank you much for your care in sending them. I should have been glad to be of any use to Mr. Perry; but he had placed his children before I saw him, and he stayed with me only a few minutes.

We see much in parliamentary proceedings, and in papers and pamphlets, of the injury the concessions to Ireland will do to the *manufacturers* of England, while the *people* of England seem to be forgotten, as if quite out of the question. If the Irish can manufacture cottons, and stuffs, and silks, and linens, and cutlery, and toys, and books, &c. &c. &c.,

¹ This letter is in A. P. S. Mr. Perry was a shipbuilder who, according to Benjamin Vaughan, possessed "the largest private ship-yard in England or perhaps in the world, and has had the building of ships of the line sufficient to form a division in a line of battle, beside forty gun ships & frigates, and various East Indiamen &c." His business in Paris at this time was the placing of his two sons for a few months in France for their improvement. — ED.

² Blackrie's Solvent, a remedy for the stone. — ED.

so as to sell them cheaper in England than the *manufacturers* of England sell them, is not this good for the *people* of England, who are not manufacturers? And will not even the manufacturers themselves share the benefit? Since if cottons are cheaper, all the other manufacturers who wear cottons will save in that article; and so of the rest. If books can be had much cheaper from Ireland, (which I believe, for I bought Blackstone there for twenty-four shillings, when it was sold in England at four guineas,) is not this an advantage, not to English booksellers, indeed, but to English readers, and to learning? And of all the complainants, perhaps these booksellers are least worthy of consideration. The catalogue you last sent me amazes me by the high prices (said to be the lowest) affixed to each article. And one can scarce see a new book, without observing the excessive artifices made use of to puff up a paper of verses into a pamphlet, a pamphlet into an octavo, and an octavo into a quarto, with scabboardings, white-lines, sparse titles of chapters, and exorbitant margins, to such a degree, that the selling of paper seems now the object, and printing on it only the pretence. I enclose the copy of a page in a late comedy. Between every two lines there is a white space equal to another line. You have a law, I think, against butchers blowing of veal to make it look fatter; why not one against booksellers' blowing of books to make them look bigger. All this *to yourself*; you can easily guess the reason.

My grandson is a little indisposed, but sends you two pamphlets, *Figaro*, and *Le Roy Voyageur*. The first is a play of Beaumarchais, which has had a great run here. The other a representation of all the supposed errors of government in this country, some of which are probably exag-

gerated. It is not publicly sold; we shall send some more shortly.

Please to remember me very respectfully and affectionately to good Dr. Price. I am glad that he has printed a translation of the Testament,¹ it may do good. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

Enclosed in the foregoing Letter.

“SCENE IV.

Sir JOHN and WILDMORE.

Whither so fast? Sir JOHN.

To the Opera. WILDMORE.

It is not the ——? Sir JOHN.

Yes it is. WILDMORE.

Never on a Sunday. Sir JOHN.

Is this Sunday? WILDMORE.

Yes sure. Sir JOHN.

WILDMORE.

I remember nothing; I shall soon forget my Christian name.”

If this page was printed running on like Erasmus's Colloquies, it would not have made more than five lines.

¹ See letter to Price, Feb. 1, 1785. — ED.

1558. TO ANTOINE-ALEXIS-FRANÇOIS CADET
DE VAUX¹

Passy, April 28, 1785.

SIR: — I return your paper relating to maïs,² which I have perused with pleasure. I am glad to learn that good beer may be made of it, which is new to me. I send herewith some observations on the use of that grain, of which you are at liberty to make such as you may think proper. Your Pâtisseur has done wonders; I am delighted with his productions, and shall wish to take a quantity of them with me to eat at sea.

With great esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1559. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (L. C.)

Passy, April 29, 1785.

MY DEAR DEAR FRIEND,

I believe my last Letter to you was of May 16, 1783.³ I am therefore much in your Debt as a Correspondent. I have now before me all your Letters since received, and shall endeavour as well as I can to answer them. I confess that a Man, who can leave so many Letters so long unanswer'd, does not deserve so valuable a Correspondence as yours. But I am

¹ Cadet De Vaux (1743–1828), a distinguished chemist. He founded the *Journal de Paris* (1777). Printed from "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 99. — ED.

² Sent April 24, 1785, to Franklin (A. P. S.). The paper was intended for publication in the *Journal de Paris*. — ED.

³ See letter to Ingenhousz, January 16, 1784. — ED.

grown very old, being now in my 80th year; I am engag'd in much Business that must not be neglected. Writing becomes more and more irksome to me; I grow more indolent; Philosophic Discussions, not being urgent like Business, are postponed from time to time till they are forgotten. Besides, I have been these 20 Months past afflicted with the Stone, which is always giving me more or less Uneasiness, unless when I am laid in Bed; and, when I would write, it interrupts my Train of Thinking, so that I lay down my Pen, and seek some light Amusement.

I hope Mr. Weinbrenner's Agent succeeded in his Voyage to America. Too much Goods have been sent there since the Peace from all Parts of Europe which has overstock'd the Market and made the Prices so low as to afford but little Profit & sometimes none to the Adventurers. Time and Experience will bring the Commerce into a more regular Train.

I consent to your request concerning my Paper on the Weathercock struck by Lightning. Dispose of it as you please.

You will find an Acc^t of the first great Stroke I received, in pages 161, 162, of my Book, 5th Edition, 1774. The second I will now give you. I had a Paralytick Patient in my Chamber, whose Friends brought him to receive some Electric Shocks. I made them join Hands so as to receive the Shock at the same time, and I charg'd two large Jars to give it. By the Number of those People, I was oblig'd to quit my usual Standing, and plac'd myself inadvertently under an Iron Hook which hung from the Cieling down to within two Inches of my Head, and communicated by a Wire with the outside of the Jars. I attempted to discharge them, and

in fact did so; but I did not perceive it, tho' the charge went thro' me, and not through the Persons I intended it for. I neither saw the Flash, heard the Report, nor felt the Stroke. When my Senses returned, I found myself on the Floor. I got up, not knowing how that had happened. I then again attempted to discharge the Jars; but one of the Company told me they were already discharg'd, which I could not at first believe, but on Trial found it true. They told me they had not felt it, but they saw I was knock'd down by it, which had greatly surprised them. On recollecting myself, and examining my Situation, I found the Case clear. A small swelling rose on the Top of my Head, which continued sore for some Days; but I do not remember any other Effect good or bad.

The Stroke you received, and its Consequences, are much more curious. I communicated that Part of your Letter to an Operator, encourag'd by Government here to electrify epileptic and other poor Patients, and advis'd his trying the Practice on mad People according to your Opinion. I have not heard whether he has done it.

It is so long since you wrote the Letters I am answering that I am apprehensive you may have forgotten some of the Particulars, and that thereby my Answers may be unintelligible. I therefore mark the Dates of your Letters in the Margin, that if you kept Copies you may recur to them.

Lady Dowager Penn¹ was here about the Time of the Treaty, and made Application to me with great Complaints, but I found she was not well inform'd of the State of her Affairs, and could not clearly show that she had suffer'd any

¹ Lady Juliana Fermor, daughter of the Earl of Pomfret, married to Thomas Penn in 1751. — ED.

Injury from the Publick of Pennsylvania, whatever she might from the Agents of the Family. Her Husband's Lands, I understand, were not confiscated as represented; but the Proprietary Government falling with that of the Crown, the Assembly took the Opportunity of insisting upon Justice in some Points, which they could never obtain under that Government. A kind of Compromise then was made between the Assembly & the Family, whereby all the vacant Lots and unappropriated wilderness Lands were to be thenceforth in the Disposition of the Assembly, who were to pay £130,000 Sterling to the Family within 3 Years after the Peace, all other Demands on both sides being thus abolish'd. I am told that this Arrangement was satisfactory to most of them. But as the Lady intended to send her Son over to solicit her Interests, I gave him a Letter of Recommendation to the Governor, proposing it for Consideration whether it might not be adviseable to reconsider the Matter, and if the sum of £130,000 should be found insufficient, to make a proper Addition. I have not heard what has since been done in the Affair, or whether any thing. In my own Judgment, when I consider that for near 80 Years, viz., from the Year 1700, William Penn and his Sons receiv'd the Quit-rents which were originally granted for the Support of Government, and yet refused to support the Government, obliging the People to make a fresh Provision for its Support all that Time, which cost them vast Sums, as the most necessary Laws were not to be obtain'd but at the Price of making such Provision; when I consider the Meanness and cruel Avarice of the late Proprietor, in refusing for several Years of War, to consent to any Defence of the Frontiers ravaged all the while by the Enemy, unless his Estate should be exempted from paying

any Part of the Expence, not to mention other Atrocities too long for this Letter, I cannot but think the Family well off, and that it will be prudent in them to take the Money and be quiet. William Penn, the First Proprietor, Father of Thomas, the Husband of the present Dowager, was a wise and good Man, and as honest to the People as the extream Distress of his Circumstances would permit him to be, but the said Thomas was a miserable Churl, always intent upon Griping and Saving; and whatever Good the Father may have done for the Province was amply undone by the Mischief receiv'd from the Son, who never did any thing that had the Appearance of Generosity or Public Spirit but what was extorted from him by Solicitation and the Shame of Backwardness in Benefits evidently incumbent on him to promote, and which was done at last in the most ungracious manner possible. The Lady's Complaints of not duly receiving her Revenues from America are habitual; they were the same during all the Time of my long Residence in London, being then made by her Husband as Excuses for the Meanness of his House-keeping and his Deficiency in Hospitality, tho' I knew at the same time that he was then in full Receipt of vast Sums annually by the Sale of Lands, Interest of Money, and Quit-rents. But probably he might conceal this from his Lady to induce greater Economy as it is known that he ordered no more of his Income home than was absolutely necessary for his Subsistence, but plac'd it at Interest in Pennsylvania & the Jerseys, where he could have 6 and 7 per Cent., while Money bore no more than 5 per cent. in England. I us'd often to hear of these Complaints and laugh at them, perceiving clearly their Motive. They serv'd him on other as well as on domestic Occasions. You remember our Rector

of St. Martin's Parish, Dr. Saunders. He once went about, during a long and severe Frost, soliciting charitable Contributions to purchase Coals for poor Families. He came among others to me, and I gave him something. It was but little, very little, and yet it occasion'd him to remark, "You are more bountiful on this Occasion than your wealthy Proprietary, Mr. Penn, but he tells me he is distress'd by not receiving his Incomes from America." The Incomes of the family there must still be very great, for they have a Number of Manors consisting of the best Lands, which are preserved to them, and vast Sums at Interest well secur'd by Mortgages; so that if the Dowager does not receive her Proportion, there must be some Fault in her Agents. You will perceive by the length of this Article that I have been a little *échauffé* by her making the Complaints you mention to the Princess Dowager of Lichtenstein at Vienna. The Lady herself is good & amiable, and I should be glad to serve her in any thing just and reasonable; but I do not at present see that I can do more than I have done.

As to Wharton, I am amaz'd at his Conduct towards you. Dr Bancroft tells me, that he believes your Money is spent, & that Wharton has it not at present to pay: But that he has Lands, & enjoys a profitable Office; so that he has hopes, that he may pay in time. In my Opinion, you would do well to make the Voyage, and when there you may at least obtain some Land. The Emperor will be good enough to give you leave to accompany your old Friend. I purpose returning to America in the ensuing summer, and shall be happy to have your Company. But if this cannot be, send me your Power of Attorney or Procuration with what Proofs you have of the Debt, and I will do my best Endeavours when there to recover it for you.

Your Ideas of the long Conservation possible of the Infection of some Diseases, appear to me well-founded. I heard in England of one Instance. In a Country Village where the Small Pox had not been for 30 Years, a Grave was opened for the Interment of a Person dead of some common Distemper, whose Funeral was accompanied by most of the Inhabitants of the Village. The Grave digger, had in his Operation broke the Coffin of a neighbouring Corpse which had dy'd of the Small Pox thirty years before. Those who attended the Ceremony of the Interment were sensible of a bad Smell issuing from the Grave, and after some Days were all taken down with that Distemper. You may yourself remember a stronger Instance. It happen'd during my Absence from England between August 1762 and December 1764, and therefore I may not be perfect in the Circumstances. A Number of Physicians, as I heard, amus'd themselves with the Dissection of an Egyptian Mummy, which must have been more than Two Thousand Years old, and several of them dyd soon after of putrid Fevers, suspected to be caught at that Dissection.

The Circumstances of the Royalists in the United States are daily mending, as the Minds of People irritated by the Burning of their Towns and Massacre of their Friends, begin to cool. A Stop is put to all Prosecutions against them, and in time their Offences will be forgotten. By our last Advices from thence the Government acquires continually more Consistence, and every thing is getting into the best Order. The English still misrepresent us and our Situation: relating things as they wish them rather than as they are. But be assured our People are happy in the Change, & have not the least Inclination to return to the Dominion of Britain.

[*Letter of Sept. 1. 83.*] I immediately sent to Mr. Bartram our celebrated Botanist of Pennsylvania, the Orders of Count Chotek for a quantity of American Seeds. It came so late to me, that it was impossible it should arrive there in time to make the Collection of Seeds of the Year 1783, consequently it would be necessary to wait for those that would be ripe in the Autumn of 1784. But having then in hand a Box of Seeds obtain'd from him at the Request of some Friends here; I divid'd them, and Sent you some of each Sort. I delivered them to the Bishop Nekrep, who said he had a good Opportunity of forwarding them, and that he would do it with Pleasure. I thought you might oblige your Friend the Count with those for the present, as they would be in time for Planting in the Spring of 1784. But I never heard whether you receiv'd them. I had a Letter last Winter from my Son-in-law, Mr Bache, acquainting me that Mr. Bartram had brought the box of Seeds to him, which he should pay for; but that he was uncertain whether he ought to send it by way of Holland as ordered, the Newspapers having announc'd a War between the Emperor and that State, which might obstruct its passage to Vienna. I wrote to him in answer, that he should nevertheless comply with the Order, and immediately, lest the Seeds should arrive too late for planting this Season, so that I hope they may be now in Holland, tho' I have heard nothing further. I enclose a Copy of the List of those sent you, except some Deficiencies.

[*Letter of Nov. 19. 83.*] I thank you much for your good Wishes of Repose and Tranquility for me in my latter Years, and for your kind invitation to come and see you at Vienna. I have sufficient Inclination but my Malady the Stone, which for 20 Months past has disabled me from using a Carriage,

is an insuperable Obstruction to such a Journey. I know we should be happy together, and therefore repeat my Proposition that you should ask Leave of the Emperor to let you come and live with me during the little Remainder of Life that is left me. I am confident his Goodness would grant your Request. You will be at no expence while with me in America; you will recover your Debt from Wharton, and you will make me happy. I am glad you received the Bill of 8000 Livres from him, which went thro' my Hands. I wish your Application of it in an East Indian Adventure may be more advantagious to you than your Adventure to the West.

I know not the Situation here of your Book, as I rarely see M. le Begue, he living much in the Country: but I am sorry for your sake as well as that of the Publick, that its Publication is so long delay'd.

As soon as I return to Philadelphia, I shall procure your Election as a Member of our Philosophical Society. I do not know any Choice that will do them more Honour.

As the American Newspapers seem to afford you Pleasure, I have sent you some more by the Baron de Windischgratz, who was so kind as to undertake the forwarding them to you. I gave him also two little Pieces of my Writing.

[*Letter of Jan. 2. 84.*] I imagine that I did answer this Letter before, tho' I find no Note of such Answer. I think I dissuaded you from being concern'd in any Project for raising a Balloon as if it should happen by any Accident not succeed, it might expose you to Ridicule, & hurt your Reputation. I was glad to hear that you declin'd it.

[*Letter of Jan. 14. 84.*] I receiv'd this Letter, said to be sent by the Countess de Fries. I should have been glad

of any Opportunity of showing Civility to a Friend of yours, and of so amiable a Character.

[*Letter of Feb. 10. 84.*] The Prelate of Nekrep appear'd a very good sort of Man. I show'd him all the Respect in my Power. I think I must have written to you by him, but I do not find any Copy of the Letter, and remember nothing of the Contents. My Memory is indeed sensibly impaired. I was sorry to hear of his Death.

I do not know that my Contrivance of a Clock with 3 Wheels only, which show'd Hours, Minutes and Seconds, has ever been publish'd. I have seen several of them here at Paris that were made by Mr. Whitehurst, and sent over I believe by Mr. Magellan. You are welcome to do what you please with it. Mr. Whitehurst's Invention is very simple, and should be very effectual, provided the foot of the Rod and the Situation of the Clock are invariably fix'd, so as never to be at a greater or less Distance from one another, which may be by fixing both in a strait-grain'd Piece of Wood of about 4 feet long; Wood not changing its Dimensions the lengthway of the Grain, by any common degree of Heat or Cold. But this cannot be trusted to the Wood of a Clock-Case, because in Sawing Boards the Grain is frequently cross'd, and Moisture and Dryness will change their Dimensions.

You are at liberty also to publish if you think fit the Experiment of the Globe floating between two Liquors. I suppose you remember to have seen it on my Chimney-piece. Tho' it is a matter of no Utility. Something of the same nature has been done more than 100 Years since by another Person, I forget who.

What I formerly mention'd to you of hanging a Weight on a spiral Spring, to discover if Bodies gravitated differently

to the Earth during the Conjunctions of the Sun and Moon, compar'd with other Times, was this. We suppose, that, by the Force of Gravity in those Luminaries, the Water of the Ocean, an immense Weight, is elevated so as to form the Tides; if that be so, might we not expect, that an iron Ball of a pound suspended by a fine spiral Spring, should, when the Sun and Moon are together both above it, be a little attracted upwards or rendered lighter, so as to be drawn up a little by the Spring on which it depends, and the contrary when they are both below it. The Quantity, tho' very small, might perhaps be rendered visible by a Contrivance like the above. It is not difficult to make this Experiment, but I have never made it. With regard to the Tides, I doubt the Opinion of there being but two High Waters and two Low Waters existing at the same time on the Globe. I rather think there are many, and those at the Distance of about 100 Leagues from each other. The Tides found in the River Amazonas seem to favour this Opinion. Observations hereafter in the Isles of the Pacific Ocean may confirm or refute it.

If I were in a Situation where I could be a little more Master of my Time, I would as you desire, write my Ideas on the Subject of Chimneys. They might I think be useful. For by what I see everywhere the Subject seems too little understood, which occasions much Inconvenience & fruitless Expence. But besides being harass'd with too much Business, I am expos'd to numberless Visits, some of Kindness and Civility, many of mere idle Curiosity, from Strangers of America & of different Parts of Europe, as well as the Inhabitants of the Provinces who come to Paris. These devour my Hours, and break my Attention, and at Night I often find myself fatigu'd without having done any thing. Celebrity

may for a while flatter one's Vanity, but its Effects are troublesome. I have begun to write two or three Things, which I wish to finish before I die; but I sometimes doubt the possibility.

I thank you much for the Postscript respecting my Disorder, the Stone. I have taken heretofore, and am now again taking the Remedy you mention, which is called *Blackrie's Solvent*. It is the Soap Lie, with Lime Water, and I believe it may have some Effect in diminishing the Symptoms, and preventing the Growth of the Stone, which is all I expect from it. It does not hurt my Appetite; I sleep well, and enjoy my Friends in chearful Conversation as usual. But, as I cannot use much Exercise, I eat more sparingly than formerly, and I drink no Wine.

I admire that you should be so timid in asking Leave of your good imperial Master to make a Journey for visiting a Friend. I am persuaded you would succeed, and I hope the Proposition I have made you in this Letter will assist your Courage, and enable you to ask and obtain. If you come here soon, you may when present get your Book finish'd, and be ready to proceed with me to America. While writing this, I have receiv'd from Congress my Leave to return; and I believe I shall be ready to embark by the middle of July, at farthest. I shall now be free of Politicks for the Rest of my Life. Welcome again my dear Philosophical Amusements.

I see by a full Page of your Letter, that you have been possess'd with strange Ideas of America; that there is no Justice to be obtain'd there, no Recovery of Debts, Projects of Insurrection to overturn the present Government, &c. &c.; that a Virginia Colonel Nephew of the Governor had cheated

a Stranger of 100,000 Livres, and that somebody was imprisoned for only speaking of it; that D^r Bancroft was afraid of Mr. Wharton's Power, and the like very improbable Stories. As to Dr. Bancroft he gave me no such Reason for not recovering his Money, nor any other but Wharton's present Inability; and for the rest believe me they are all Fictions or Misrepresentations. If they were Truths, all Strangers would avoid such a Country, and foreign Merchants would as soon carry their Goods to sell in Newgate as to America. Think a little on the Sums England has spent to preserve a Monopoly of the Trade of that People, with whom they had long been acquainted, and of the Desire all Europe is now manifesting to obtain a Share of that Trade. Our Ports are full of their Ships, their Merchants buying and selling in our Streets continually, and returning with our Products. Would this happen? Could such Commerce be continu'd with us, if we were such a Collection of Scoundrels and Villains as we have been represented to you? And Insurrections against our Rulers are not only unlikely, as the Rulers are the Choice of the People, but unnecessary; as, if not lik'd, they may be chang'd annually by the new Elections.

I own you have Cause, great Cause to complain of Wharton, but you are wrong to condemn a whole Country by a single Sample. I have seen many Countries, & I do not know a Country in the World in which Justice is so well administ'red, where Protection and Favour have so little Power to impede its Operations, and where Debts are recovered with so much Facility. If I thought it such a Country as it has been painted to you, I should certainly never return to it. The Truth I believe is, that more Goods have been carried thither from all Parts of Europe, than the Consumption of the Coun-

try requires, & it is natural that some of the Adventurers are willing to discourage others from following them, lest the Prices should still be kept down by the Arrival of fresh Cargoes; and it is not unlikely, that some negligent or unfaithful Factors sent thither, may have given such Accounts to excuse their not making Remittances. And the English magnify all this, and spread it abroad in their Papers, to dissuade Foreigners from attempting to interfere with them in their Commerce with us.

Your Account of the Emperor's condescending Conversation with you concerning me, is pleasing. I respect very much the Character of that Monarch, and think, that, if I were one of his Subjects, he would find me a good One. I am glad that his Difference with your Country is likely to be accommodated without Bloodshed. The *Courier de l'Europe*, and some other Papers, printed a Letter on that Difference, which they ascrib'd to me. Be assured my Friend that I never wrote it, nor was ever presumptuous enough to meddle with an Affair so much out of my way.

All the Letters you at any time enclos'd to me have been faithfully forwarded. I obtain'd from Mr. Williams an Answer which I enclose. I am asham'd I have kept it so long; but I had put it among your Letters, intending to send it with the first I should write to you, and that has been too long delay'd.

Mesmer continues here and has still some Adherents and some Practice. It is surprizing how much Credulity still subsists in the World. I suppose all the Physicians in France put together have not made so much Money during the Time he has been here, as he has done. And we have now a fresh Folly. A Magnetiser pretends that he can by

establishing what is called a *Rapport* between any Person and a Somnambule, put it in the Power of that Person to direct the Actions of the Somnambule, by a simple strong Volition only, without Speaking or making any Signs; and many People daily flock to see this strange Operation!

Your last did not reach me till long after its Date. I have spent some Days in writing this. It is now the 2d of May, and I shall not be able to forward it till by Thursday's Post, the 5th Instant. If in the meantime I can learn anything respecting the Publication of your Book I will add it in a Postscript. Rejoice with me, my dear Friend, that I am once more a Freeman: after Fifty Years Service in Public Affairs. And let me know soon if you will make me happy the little Remainder left me of my Life, by spending the Time with me in America.

I have Instruments if the Enemy did not destroy them all, and we will make Plenty of Experiments together.

Believe me ever,

Yours most affectionately

B. F.

1560. TO COMTE DE VERGENNES (L. C.)

Passy, May 3, 1785.

SIR,

I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency, that I have at length obtain'd, and yesterday receiv'd, the Permission of Congress to return to America. As my Malady makes it impracticable for me to pay my Devoirs at Versailles personally, may I beg the favour of you, Sir, to express respectfully for me to his Majesty, the deep Sense I have of

all the inestimable Benefits his Goodness has conferr'd on my Country; a Sentiment that it will be the Business of the little Remainder of Life now left me, to impress equally on the Minds of all my Countrymen. My sincere Prayers are, that God may shower down his Blessings on the King, the Queen, their Children, and all the royal Family to the latest Generations!

Permit me, at the same time, to offer you my thankful Acknowledgments for the Protection and Countenance you afforded me at my Arrival, and your many Favours during my Residence here, of which I shall always retain the most grateful Remembrance. My Grandson would have had the honour of waiting on you with this Letter, but he has been some time ill of a Fever.

With the greatest Esteem and Respect, and best Wishes for the constant Prosperity of yourself, and all your amiable family, I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1561. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, May 5, 1785.

MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND,

I receiv'd your little Letter from Dover, which gave me great Pleasure, as it inform'd me of your happy Progress so far in your way home. I hope the rest of your Journey was as prosperous.²

You talk of Obligations to me, when in fact I am the

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

² Mrs. Hewson and her children had spent the winter with Dr. Franklin at Passy. — ED.

Person oblig'd. I pass'd a long Winter, in a manner that made it appear the shortest of any I ever past. Such is the Effect of pleasing Society, with Friends one loves.

I have now receiv'd my Permission to return, and am making my Preparations. I hope to get away in June. I promise myself, or rather flatter myself, that I shall be happy when at home. But, however happy that Circumstance may make me, your joining me there will surely make me happier, provided your Change of Country may be for the advantage of your dear little Family. When you have made up your Mind on the Subject, let me know by a Line, that I may prepare a House for you as near me, and otherwise as convenient for you, as possible.

My Neighbours begin to come out from Paris, and replace themselves in their Passy Houses. They enquire after you, and are sorry you are gone before they could make themselves known to you. For those who did know you speak well of you. M. le Veillard, in particular, has told me at different times, what indeed I knew long since, *C'est une bien digne Femme, cette Madame Hewson, une très aimable Femme.* I would not tell you this if I thought it would make you vain — er than you are; but that is impossible; you have too much good Sense.

So wish me a good Voyage, and, when you pray at Church for all that travel by Land or Sea, think of your ever affectionate Friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My love to William, and Thomas, and Eliza, and tell them I miss their chearful Prattle. Temple being sick, and Benjamin at Paris, I have found it very *triste* breakfasting alone, and sitting alone, and without any Tea in the Evening.

1562. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (P. C.)

Passy May 5. 1785

DEAR JONATHAN

I wrote you some Days since, and enclos'd you several Letters I had receiv'd respecting your Affairs. Enclos'd is another which came to hand this Morning. You will let me know what I should say to this Man. He has shown me a Letter of yours ordering the Goods and undertaking to pay for them.

I have at length received my long-expected Permission to return to America, and I am preparing for my Departure, tho' I have not yet determin'd how I shall go. It is now said that the May Packet is the last to go from L'Orient, and that the June Packet and all succeeding ones are to go from Havre. I incline (if this is true, and no better means offers) to go in the June Packet. But there is a Mr. Ger-vaise from Boston who tells me that a fine new Ship of Peck's Construction, 400 Tons Burthen will sail from Holland for Boston in July; and that he has no doubt the Captain will be prevail'd on to call for me and my Family at Havre, to which Place I can go by Water; and that he will talk with the Captain on the Subject as soon as he arrives in Holland, which will be in a few Days and write me Word whether he will undertake it and on what Terms.

I have indeed no great Objection to landing in Boston, as tho' there will then be another Voyage to get home, I shall have the Pleasure of seeing Friends once more, whom otherwise I may never see. But as this Project may not

¹ From the original in the possession of Louis A. Biddle, Esq. — ED.

answer I wish you would enquire and inform me whether there are any good Vessels bound from London to Boston, N. York, or Philadelphia or Baltimore to sail in June, that would take us at Havre. I shall need the most comfortable Accommodation the Ship can afford, being so old and infirm, and I expect to pay accordingly. There will be myself and two Grandsons at least, perhaps another Person, and two Servants. I shall have also with me four [mutilated] Tons perhaps of Goods. And if it will suit [mutilated] to go with us so much the better. The sooner you give me the Information you can collect the more satisfactory it will be, as it will enable me sooner to make my Determination. As to Mrs. Hewson's Family I know not yet whether she ever intends going to America but as she intends a Journey to Yorkshire, it is not probable she can make the American Voyage this Summer. Billy is better and sends his Love. I am ever

Your affectionate Uncle

B. FRANKLIN.

1563. TO JOHN JAY¹ (L. C.)

Passy, May 10, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of the 8th of March, enclosing the Resolution of Congress, permitting my Return to America, for which I am very thankful, and am now preparing to depart the first good Opportunity. Next to the Pleasure of rejoining my own Family will be that of seeing you and yours well and happy, and embracing once more my little Friend, whose singular Attachment to me I shall always remember.

¹ Mr. Jay was at this time Secretary of Foreign Affairs, having been chosen as successor to Mr. Livingston, who had resigned.—ED.

I shall be glad to render any acceptable Service to Mr. Randall.¹ I convey'd the Bayberry Wax to Abbé de Chalut, with your Compliments, as you desired. He returns his with many Thanks. Be pleased to make my respectfull Compliments acceptable to Mrs. Jay, and believe me ever, with sincere and great Respect and Esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1564. TO CHARLES THOMSON (L. C.)

Passy, May 10, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

An old Gentleman in Switzerland, long of the Magistracy there, having written a book intitl'd *Du Gouvernement des Mœurs*,² which is thought to contain many Matters, that may be useful in America, desired to know of me how he could convey a Number of the printed Copies, to be distributed gratis among the Members of Congress. I advis'd his addressing the Package to you by way of Amsterdam, whence a Friend of mine would forward it. It is accordingly shipt there on board the Van Berckel, Capt. W. Campbell mark'd [x]. N^o 990. There are good Things in the Work, but his Chapter on the Liberty of the Press appears to me to contain more Rhetorick than Reason. With great Esteem, I am ever, Dear Sir,

Yours Affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Paul Randall, son of a merchant of New York. — ED.

² By Pollier, published at Lausanne, 1784. — ED.

1565. TO MR. AND MRS. RICHARD BACHE (L. C.)

Passy, May 10, 1785.

DEAR SON AND DAUGHTER: — Having at length received from Congress Permission to return home, I am now preparing for my departure, and hope to get away by the Middle of next Month, or the End at farthest, tho' I know not yet whether it will be by the Packet or some other Vessel. Fearing that the Packet may be crowded with Passengers, I have desired my Cousin, Jonathan Williams, now in London, to enquire whether there may not be found some good Vessel bound directly to Philadelphia, who would agree to take me on board at Havre, with my Grandsons and Servants, and my Baggage, etc. Infirm as I am, I have need of comfortable Room and Accommodations. I was miserably lodg'd in coming over hither, which almost demolish'd me. I must be better stow'd now, or I shall not be able to hold out the Voyage. Indeed my Friends here are so apprehensive for me, that they press me much to remain in France, and three of them have offer'd me an Asylum in their Habitations. They tell me I am here among a People who universally esteem and love me; that my Friends at home are diminish'd by Death in my Absence; that I may there meet with Envy and its consequent Enmity which here I am perfectly free from; this supposing I live to compleat the Voyage, but of that they doubt. The Desire however of spending the little Remainder of Life with my Family, is so strong, as to determine me to try, at least, whether I can bear the Motion of a Ship. If not, I must get them to set me on shore somewhere in the Channel, and content myself to die in Europe.

It is long since I have heard from you or of you. I hope, however, that you and the Children continue well. Ben is very well, and growing amazingly. He promises to be a stout as well as a good Man. Temple has been ill lately with a Fever, but is getting better and sends his Duty. I suppose Ben writes. I am ever my dear Children, your affectionate Father,

B. FRANKLIN
in his 80th Year.

1566. TO MARÉCHAL DE CASTRIES (A. P. S.)

Passy, May 16, 1785.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 9th Instant, respecting an Advance made to Mr. Bingham Agent of the United States at Martinique, amounting to 200,216 #5. for which he is held accountable. Mr. Bingham resided at Paris during the Winter, with his Family; but is now gone to London, and I know not his Address there. Before his Departure he obtain'd some Letters of Introduction to the Minister of France at that Court, and probably therefore is acquainted with residence; and I submit it to your Consideration, whether it may not be well to charge that Minister with the Demand, as I am about to depart for America, and shall probably have no Opportunity of seeing Mr. Bingham, for which reason I return the Letter. With great Respect, I am, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient
& most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1567. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (P. C.)

DEAR JONATHAN

Passy May 19. 1785

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¹ The Conversations you mention respecting America are pitiable. Those People speak what they wish; but she was certainly never in a more happy Situation. They are angry with us and hate us, and speak all manner of evil of us; but we flourish, notwithstanding. They put me in mind of a violent High Church Factor, resident some time in Boston, when I was a Boy. He had bought upon Speculation a Connecticut Cargo of Onions; which he flatter'd himself he might sell again to great Profit, but the Price fell, and they lay upon hand. He was heartily vex'd with his Bargain, especially when he observ'd they began to *grow* in the Store he had fill'd with them. He show'd them one Day to a Friend. "Here they are," says he, "and they are *growing* too! I damn 'em every day; but I think they are like the Presbyterians; the more I curse 'em, the more they *grow*."

Billy is got well again and I suppose writes. My Disorder has its bad and good Days: At present I am tolerably affected by it; but sometimes the Pain is hard to bear. I wish you to buy and send me Blackrie's Disquisition on Medicines that dissolve the Stone.² You will find it at Wilkie's, N^o 71, Paul's Churchyard. I am ever, your Affectionate Uncle

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ The first paragraph of this letter I have omitted. It contains remarks upon his preparations for his homeward voyage, the substance of which is to be found in other letters. The original is in the possession of Louis A. Biddle, Esq. — ED.

² "A Disquisition on Medicines which dissolve the Stone, in which Dr.

1568. TO CALEB WHITEFOORD (B. M.)

Passy May 19. 1785

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND

I have desired my Nephew Mr. Williams to buy a Book for me, Blackrie's *Disquisitions upon Medicines for dissolving the Stone*. It treats I understand of the Sope-Lye, which is recommended in the Pamphlet you were so kind as to send me. But as he may not easily find an Opportunity of sending it to me, I have directed him to consult with you, hoping that if it is not too big, you may prevail to have it come by the Court Courier, under Cover to your Friend here, who will immediately give it to me.

I am really griev'd to learn by your Letter to my Grandson, that your public Services at the Treaty remain yet unrewarded.¹ You were long and usefully employ'd here, and it is a shame you should be so long neglected. The Ministry being chang'd does not lessen your Merit with regard to the Public. You had a great loss in the Death of that truly good Man Mr. Oswald.² For I know it was his intention, tho' he would not accept of anything for himself on Account of his Employment here, to make it a Point with Government, the obtaining a handsome Provision for you. It is unlucky, I think in the Affairs of this World, that the Wise and Good should be as mortal as Common People

Chittick's secret is considered and discovered," by Alexander Blackrie. London, 1766. 12mo. — ED.

¹ It was not until 1793 that a pension of £200 a year was secured to Whitefoord for his services. — ED.

² Richard Oswald died November 6, 1784. — ED.

and that they often die before others are found fit to supply their Places.

I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately.

B. FRANKLIN.

1569. TO GEORGE WHATLEY ¹

Passy, May 19, 1785.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I received the very good letter you sent me by my grandson, together with your resemblance, which is placed in my chamber, and gives me great pleasure. There is no trade, they say, without returns, and therefore I am punctual in making those you have ordered.

I intended this should have been a long epistle, but I am interrupted, and can only add, that I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1570. TO GEORGE WHATLEY (L. C.)

Passy, May 23, 1785.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I sent you a few Lines the other Day, with the Medallion, when I should have written more, but was prevented by the coming in of a *Bavard*, who worried me till Evening. I bore with him, and now you are to bear with me; for I shall probably *bavarder* in answering your Letter.

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 183.—ED.

I am not acquainted with the Saying of Alphonsus,¹ which you allude to as a Sanctification of your Rigidity, in refusing to allow me the Plea of Old Age, as an Excuse for my Want of Exactness in Correspondence. What was that Saying? You do not, it seems, feel any occasion for such an Excuse, though you are, as you say, rising 75. But I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) 80, and I leave the Excuse with you till you arrive at that Age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its Validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

I must agree with you, that the Gout is bad, and that the Stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together, and I join in your Prayer, that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the Author of the Epitaph² you send me was a little mistaken, when he, speaking of the World, says, that

“ he ne’er car’d a pin
What they said or may say of the Mortal within.”

It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that Desire; and that at least he wish’d to be thought a Wit, or he would not have given himself the Trouble of writing so good an Epitaph to leave behind him. Was it not as worthy of his Care, that the World should say he was an honest and a good Man? I like better the concluding Sentiment in the old Song, call’d *The Old Man’s Wish*, wherein, after wishing for a warm House in a country Town, an easy Horse, some good old authors, ingenious and cheerful Companions, a Pudding on Sundays, with stout Ale, and a bottle of Bur-

¹ The wish of King Alphonsus was to have old friends, old books, old wine, and old wood, whence Whatley gathered that the age of friends ought not to be a plea for indolence or inexactness.—ED.

² Pope’s Epitaph, Ep. XVI, 6.—ED.

gundy, &c. &c., in separate Stanzas, each ending with this burthen,

“ May I govern my Passions with an absolute sway,
Grow wiser and better as my Strength wears away,
Without Gout or Stone, by a gentle Decay; ”

he adds,

“ With a Courage undaunted may I face my last day,
And, when I am gone, may the better Sort say,
‘ In the Morning when sober, in the Evening when mellow,
He’s gone, and has not left behind him his Fellow;
For he governed his Passions, &c.’ ”

But what signifies our Wishing? Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing Song* a thousand times, when I was young, and now find, at Fourscore, that the three Contraries have befallen me, being subject to the Gout and the Stone, and not being yet Master of all my Passions. Like the proud Girl in my Country, who wished and resolv’d not to marry a Parson, nor a Presbyterian, nor an Irishman; and at length found herself married to an Irish Presbyterian Parson.

You see I have some reason to wish, that, in a future State, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it; for I, too, with your Poet, *trust in God*. And when I observe, that there is great Frugality, as well as Wisdom, in his Works, since he has been evidently sparing both of Labour and Materials; for by the various wonderful Inventions of Propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his World with Plants and Animals, without being at the Trouble of repeated new Creations; and by the natural Reduction of compound Substances to their original Elements, capable of being employ’d in new Compositions, he has prevented the Necessity of creating new Matter; so that the Earth, Water, Air, and perhaps Fire, which being com-

pounded form Wood, do, when the Wood is dissolved, return, and again become Air, Earth, Fire, and Water; I say, that, when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a Drop of Water wasted, I cannot suspect the Annihilation of Souls, or believe, that he will suffer the daily Waste of Millions of Minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual Trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the World, I believe I shall, in some Shape or other, always exist; and, with all the inconveniencies human Life is liable to, I shall not object to a new Edition of mine; hoping, however, that the *Errata* of the last may be corrected.

I return your Note of Children receiv'd in the Foundling Hospital at Paris, from 1741 to 1755, inclusive; and I have added the Years preceding as far back as 1710 together with the general Christnings of the City, and the Years succeeding down to 1770. Those since that Period I have not been able to obtain. I have noted in the Margin the gradual Increase, viz. from every tenth Child so thrown upon the Public, till it comes to every third! Fifteen Years have passed since the last Account, and probably it may now amount to one half. Is it right to encourage this monstrous Deficiency of natural Affection? A Surgeon I met with here excused the Women of Paris, by saying, seriously, that they *could not* give suck; "*Car,*" dit il, "*elles n'ont point de tetons.*" He assur'd me it was a Fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the Breast; "they have nothing more there," said he, "than I have upon the Back of my hand." I have since thought that there might be some Truth in his Observation, and that, possibly, Nature, finding they made no use of Bubbies, has left off giving them any. Yet, since Rousseau, with admirable Eloquence, pleaded for the Rights of

Children to their Mother's Milk, the Mode has changed a little; and some Ladies of Quality now suckle their Infants and find Milk enough. May the Mode descend to the lower Ranks, till it becomes no longer the Custom to pack their Infants away, as soon as born, to the *Enfans Trouvés*, with the careless Observation, that the King is better able to maintain them.

I am credibly inform'd, that nine-tenths of them die there pretty soon, which is said to be a great Relief to the Institution, whose Funds would not otherwise be sufficient to bring up the Remainder. Except the few Persons of Quality above mentioned, and the Multitude who send to the Hospital, the Practice is to hire Nurses in the Country to carry out the Children, and take care of them there. There is an Office for examining the Health of Nurses, and giving them Licenses. They come to Town on certain Days of the Week in Companies to receive the Children, and we often meet Trains of them on the Road returning to the neighbouring Villages, with each a Child in her Arms. But those, who are good enough to try this way of raising their Children, are often not able to pay the Expence; so that the Prisons of Paris are crowded with wretched Fathers and Mothers confined *pour Mois de Nourrice*, tho' it is laudably a favorite Charity to pay for them, and set such Prisoners at Liberty. I wish Success to the new Project of assisting the Poor to keep their Children at home, because I think there is no Nurse like a Mother (or not many), and that, if Parents did not immediately send their Infants out of their Sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurr'd to greater Industry for their Maintenance. This is a Subject you understand better than I, and, therefore, having perhaps said too

much, I drop it. I only add to the Notes a Remark, from the *History of the Academy of Sciences*, much in favour of the Foundling Institution.

The Philadelphia Bank goes on, as I hear, very well. What you call the Cincinnati Institution is no Institution of our Government, but a private Convention among the Officers of our late Army, and so universally dislik'd by the People, that it is supposed it will be dropt. It was considered as an Attempt to establish something like an hereditary Rank or Nobility. I hold with you, that it was wrong; may I add, that all *descending* Honours are wrong and absurd; that the Honour of virtuous Actions appertains only to him that performs them, and is in its nature incommunicable. If it were communicable by Descent, it must also be divisible among the Descendants; and the more ancient the Family, the less would be found existing in any one Branch of it; to say nothing of the greater Chance of unlucky Interruptions.¹

Our Constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the Congress were a permanent Body, there would be more Reason in being jealous of giving it Powers. But its Members are chosen annually, cannot be chosen more than three Years successively, nor more than three Years in seven; and any of them may be recall'd at any time, whenever their Constituents shall be dissatisfied with their Conduct.² They are of the People, and return again to mix with the People, having no more durable preëminence than the different Grains of Sand in an Hourglass. Such an Assembly cannot easily become dangerous to Liberty. They are the Servants of the People, sent together to do the People's Business, and

¹ See letter to Mrs. Bache, dated January 26, 1784. — ED.

² These were the provisions of the old confederation. — S.

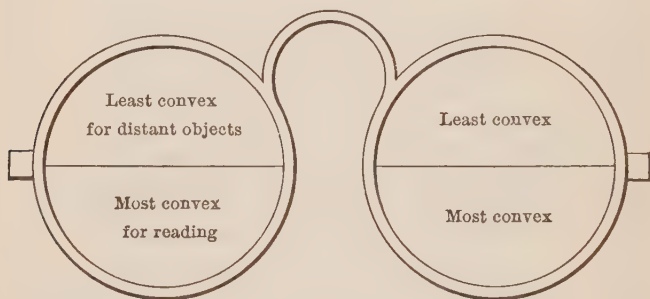
promote the public Welfare; their Powers must be sufficient, or their Duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable Appointments, but a mere Payment of daily Wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their Expences; so that, having no Chance for great Places, and enormous Salaries or Pensions, as in some Countries, there is no triguing or bribing for Elections.

I wish Old England were as happy in its Government, but I do not see it. Your People, however, think their Constitution the best in the World, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good Opinion of one's self, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own Religion, King, and Wife, the best of all possible Wives, Kings, or Religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travell'd two Years in Europe under the care of some Moravian Missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England. When I asked them at Philadelphia, where they were in their Way home, whether, now they had seen how much more commodiously the white People lived by the help of the Arts, they would not choose to remain among us; their Answer was, that they were pleased with having had an Opportunity of seeing so many fine things, *but they chose to LIVE in their own Country*. Which Country, by the way, consisted of rock only, for the Moravians were obliged to carry Earth in their Ship from New York, for the purpose of making there a Cabbage Garden.

By Mr. Dollond's¹ Saying, that my double Spectacles can only serve particular Eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly informed of their Construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true, that the same Convexity of Glass,

¹ Peter Dollond (1730-1820), optician. — ED.

through which a Man sees clearest and best at the Distance proper for Reading, is not the best for greater Distances. I therefore had formerly two Pair of Spectacles, which I shifted occasionally, as in travelling I sometimes read, and often wanted to regard the Prospects. Finding this Change troublesome, and not always sufficiently ready, I had the Glasses cut, and half of each kind associated in the same Circle, thus,



By this means, as I wear my Spectacles constantly, I have only to move my Eyes up or down, as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper Glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France, the Glasses that serve me best at Table to see what I eat, not being the best to see the Faces of those on the other Side of the Table who speak to me; and when one's Ears are not well accustomed to the Sounds of a Language, a Sight of the Movements in the Features of him that speaks helps to explain; so that I understand French better by the help of my Spectacles.

My intended translator of your Piece, the only one I know who understands the *Subject*, as well as the two Languages, (which a translator ought to do, or he cannot make so good

a Translation,) is at present occupied in an Affair that prevents his undertaking it; but that will soon be over. I thank you for the Notes. I should be glad to have another of the printed Pamphlets.

We shall always be ready to take your Children, if you send them to us. I only wonder, that, since London draws to itself, and consumes such Numbers of your Country People, the Country should not, to supply their Places, want and willingly receive the Children you have to dispose of. That Circumstance, together with the Multitude who voluntarily part with their Freedom as Men, to serve for a time as Lac[k]eys, or for Life as Soldiers, in consideration of small Wages, seems to me a Proof that your Island is over-peopled. And yet it is afraid of Emigrations! Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me ever yours very affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1571. TO CHRISTOPHER WYVILL¹ (A. P. S.)

Passy, June 16, 1785

SIR

I send you herewith the Sketch I promis'd you. Perhaps it may be of use to publish something of the kind: For if the power of Chusing now in the Boroughs continues to be allow'd as a Right, they may think themselves more justifiable

¹ Christopher Wyvill (1740-1822), prominent in country politics, was an earnest advocate of parliamentary reform. He was chairman of the Yorkshire Association, which aimed among other things to equalize the representation in Parliament. Its political sentiments were announced in a circular letter drawn up by Wyvill, and in the Yorkshire petition presented to Parliament, February 8, 1780. — ED.

in demanding more for it, or in holding back longer, than they would if they find that it begins to be consider'd as an Abuse. With great Esteem, I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1572. ON THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISES ENJOYED BY THE SMALL BOROUGHES IN ENGLAND ¹

No man, or body of men, in any nation, can have a just right to any privilege or franchise not common to the rest of the nation, without having done the nation some service equivalent, for which the franchise or privilege was the recompense or consideration.

No man, or body of men, can be justly deprived of a common right, but for some equivalent offence or injury done to the society in which he enjoyed that right.

If a number of men are unjustly deprived of a common right, and the same is given in addition to the common rights of another number, who have not merited such addition, the injustice is double.

Few, if any, of the boroughs in England, ever performed any *such* particular service to the nation, entitling them to what they now claim as a privilege in elections.

Originally, in England, when the King issued his writs

¹ Addressed to Christopher Wyvill, not Sir Charles Wyvill as in Sparks and Bigelow; the baronetcy became dormant in 1774. See Thomas Secombe's article upon Christopher Wyvill in "Dict. of Nat. Biog." — ED.

calling upon counties, cities, and boroughs, to depute persons who should meet him in Parliament, the intention was to obtain by that means more perfect information of the general state of the kingdom, its faculties, strength, and disposition; together with the advice their accumulated wisdom might afford him in "such arduous affairs of the realm" as he had to propose. And he might reasonably hope, that measures approved by the deputies in such an assembly would, on their return home, be by them well explained, and rendered agreeable to their constituents and the nation in general. At that time, being sent to Parliament was not considered as being put into the way of preferment, or increase of fortune; therefore no bribe was given to obtain the appointment. The deputies were to be paid wages by their constituents; therefore the being obliged to send and pay was considered rather as a duty than a privilege. At this day, in New England, many towns, who may and ought to send members to the Assembly, sometimes neglect to do it; they are then summoned to answer for their neglect, and fined if they cannot give a good excuse; such as some common misfortune, or some extraordinary public expense, which disabled them from affording, conveniently, the necessary wages. And, the wages allowed being barely sufficient to defray the deputy's expense, no solicitations are used to be chosen.

In England, as soon as the being sent to Parliament was found to be a step towards acquiring both honour and fortune, solicitations were practised, and, where they were insufficient, money was given. Both the ambitious and avaricious became candidates. But to solicit the poor labourer for his vote being humiliating to the proud man, and to pay for it hurting the lover of money, they, when they met, joined in an act to

diminish both these inconveniences, by depriving the poor of the right of voting, which certainly they were not empowered to do by the electors their constituents, the majority of whom were probably people of little property. The act was, therefore, not only unjust, but void. These lower people were, immediately afterwards, oppressed by another act, empowering the justices to fix the hire of day-labourers and their hours of work, and to send them to the house of correction if they refused to work for such hire; which was deposing them from their condition of freemen, and making them literally slaves.

But this was taking from *many* freemen a *common right*, and confirming it to a *few*. To give it back again to the many is a different operation. Of this the few have no just cause to complain, because they still retain the common right they always had, and they lose only the exclusive additional power which they ought never to have had. And if they used it, when they had it, as a means of obtaining money, they should in justice, were it practicable, be obliged to refund and distribute such money among those who had been so unjustly deprived of their right of voting, or forfeit it to the public.

Corporations, therefore, or boroughs, who, from being originally called to send deputies to Parliament, when it was considered merely as a duty, and not as a particular privilege, and therefore was never purchased by any equivalent service to the public, continue to send, now that by a change of times it affords them profit in bribes, or emoluments of various kinds, have in reality *no right* to such advantages; which are besides in effect prejudicial to the nation, some of those who buy thinking they may also sell.

They should therefore, in justice, be immediately deprived

of such pretended right, and reduced to the condition of common freemen.

But they are perhaps too strong, and their interest too weighty, to permit such justice to be done. And a regard for public good in these people, influencing a voluntary resignation, is not to be expected.

If that be the case, it may be necessary to submit to the power of present circumstances, passions, and prejudices, and purchase, since we can do no better, their consent; as men, when they cannot otherwise recover property unjustly detained from them, advertise a reward to whoever will restore it, promising that no questions shall be asked.

1573. TO THOMAS BARCLAY (L. C.)

Passy, June 19, 1785.

SIR,

With respect to my continuing to charge £2500 Sterling per Annum as my Salary, of which you desire some Explanation, I send you, in support of that Charge, the Resolution of Congress, which is in these words.

“In Congress, October 5th, 1779. Resolved, that each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary be allowed at the rate of £2500 Sterling per Annum, and each of their Secretaries at the rate of £1000 Sterling per Annum, in full for their Services and Expences respectively. That the Salary of each of the said Officers be computed from the time of his leaving his Place of Abode, to enter on the Duties of his Office, and be continued three Months after the Notice of his Recall.”

The several Bills I afterwards receiv'd, drawn on the Congress Banker, Mr. Grand, for my Salary, were all calculated on that salary; and neither the Banker nor myself has receiv'd Notice of any Change respecting me. He has accordingly, since the Drawing ceas'd, continu'd to pay me at the same Rate. I have indeed heard that a Resolution was pass'd last year, that the Salaries of Plenipotentiaries should be no more than £2,000 Sterling per ann. But that Resolution, I suppose, can relate only to such Plenipotentiaries as should be afterwards appointed; for I cannot conceive, that the Congress, after promising a Minister £2500 a year, and when he has thereby been encourag'd to engage in a Way of Living for their Honour, which only that Salary can support, would think it just to diminish it a Fifth, and leave him under the Difficulty of reducing his Expences proportionably; a thing scarce practicable; the Necessity of which he might have avoided, if he had not confided in their original Promise.

But the Article of Salary with all the Rest of my Account will be submitted to the Judgment of Congress, together with some other considerable Articles I have not charged, but on which I shall expect, from their Equity, some Consideration. If, for want of knowing precisely the Intention of Congress, what Expences should be deem'd Public, and what not public, I have charg'd any Article to the Public, which should be defray'd by me, their banker has my Order, as soon as the Pleasure of Congress shall be made known to him, to rectify the Error, by transferring the Amount to my private Account, and discharging by so much that of the publick. I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1574. TO —

(L. C.)

Passy, June 20, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the only letter from you that has given me pain. It informs me of your intention to attempt passing to England in the car of a balloon. In the present imperfect state of that invention, I think it much too soon to hazard a voyage of that distance. It is said here by some of those, who have had experience, that as yet they have not found means to keep up a balloon more than two hours; for that, by now and then losing air to prevent rising too high and bursting, and now and then discharging ballast to avoid descending too low; these means of regulation are exhausted. Besides this, all the circumstances of danger by disappointment, in the operation of *souppapes*, &c. &c.; seem not to be yet well known, and therefore not easily provided against. For on Wednesday last M. Pilâtre de Rosier,¹ who had studied the subject as much as any man, lost his support in the air, by the bursting of his balloon, or by some other means we are yet unacquainted with, and fell with his companion² from the height of one thousand toises, on the rocky coast, and were both found dashed to pieces.

¹ Jean-François Pilâtre De Rozier (1756–1785) was Professor of Chemistry at the *Athénée royal*, of which he was the founder in 1781. With the Marquis d'Arlandes he made the first balloon ascension (November 21, 1783). He was killed, June 15, 1785, in the fall of his balloon, near Boulogne sur Mer.

An epitaph was dedicated to him: —

“Ci git un jeune téméraire,
Qui, dans son généreux transport,
De l'Olympe étonné franchissant la barrière
Y trouva le premier et la gloire et la mort.” — ED.

² A physicist named Romain. — ED.

You, having lived a good life, do not fear death. But pardon the anxious freedom of a friend, if he tells you, that, the continuance of your life being of importance to your family and your country, though you might laudably hazard it for their good, you have no right to risk it for a fancy. I pray God this may reach you in time, and have some effect towards changing your design; being ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1575. TO JEAN-JACQUES CAFFIERI (L. C.)

Passy le 20 Juin 1785

SIR

I receiv'd the two obliging Letters you have lately written to me. Please to deliver one of the Busts to M. le Roy of the Academy of Sciences, and keep the other till call'd for by M. Carmichael, Chargé des Affaires des Etats Unis at Madrid. Send me a Bill of the Expence with a Receipt, and it shall be immediately paid.

Your Complaints of Injustice, of being supplanted, &c. seem to have been founded on a Mistake. You have not considered the 13 States of America as so many distinct Governments, each of which has a Right to employ what Artist it thinks proper, and is under no kind of Obligation to employ one who has been employ'd before, either by the Congress or by particular States. The State of Virginia, therefore, in chusing another, tho' perhaps they may not have made a better Choice, have certainly done you no Injustice.

With great Esteem I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1576. TO FRANCIS MASERES ¹

Passy, June 26, 1785.

SIR,

I have just received your friendly letter of the 20th instant. I agree with you perfectly in the opinion, that, though the contest has been hurtful to both our countries, yet the event, a separation, is better even for yours than success. The reducing and keeping us in subjection by an armed force would have cost you more than the dominion could be worth, and our slavery would have brought on yours. The ancient system of the British empire was a happy one, by which the colonies were allowed to govern and tax themselves. Had it been wisely continued, it is hard to imagine the degree of power and importance in the world that empire might have arrived at. All the means of growing greatness, extent of territory, agriculture, commerce, arts, population, were within its own limits, and therefore at its command.

I used to consider that system as a large and beautiful porcelain vase; I lamented the measures that I saw likely to break it, and strove to prevent them; because, once broken, I saw no probability of its being ever repaired. My endeavours did not succeed; we are broken, and the parts must now do as well as they can for themselves. We may still do well, though separated. I have great hopes of our side, and good wishes for yours. The anarchy and confusion you mention, as supposed to prevail among us, exist only in your newspapers. I have authentic accounts, which

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 461.—ED.

assure me, that no people were ever better governed, or more content with their respective constitutions and governments, than the present Thirteen States of America.

A little reflection may convince any reasonable man, that a government wherein the administrators are chosen annually by the free voice of the governed, and may also be recalled at any time if their conduct displeases their constituents, cannot be a tyrannical one, as your Loyalists represent it; who at the same time inconsistently desire to return and live under it. And, among an intelligent, enlightened people, as ours is, there must always be too numerous and too strong a party for supporting good government and the laws, to suffer what is called anarchy. This better account of our situation must be pleasing to your humanity, and therefore I give it you.

But we differ a little in our sentiments respecting the Loyalists (as they call themselves), and the conduct of America towards them, which, you think, "seems actuated by a spirit of revenge; and that it would have been more agreeable to policy, as well as justice, to have restored their estates upon their taking the oaths of allegiance to the new governments." That there should still be some resentment against them in the breasts of those, who have had their houses, farms, and towns so lately destroyed, and relations scalped under the conduct of these royalists, is not wonderful; though I believe the opposition given by many to their reëstablishing among us is owing to a firm persuasion, that there could be no reliance on their oaths; and that the effect of receiving those people again would be an introduction of that very anarchy and confusion they falsely reproach us with. Even the example you propose, of the English Commonwealth's restoring the

estates of the royalists after their being subdued, seems rather to countenance and encourage our acting differently, as probably if the power, which always accompanies property, had not been restored to the royalists, if their estates had remained confiscated, and their persons had been banished, they could not have so much contributed to the restoration of kingly power, and the new government of the republic might have been more durable.

The majority of examples in your history are on the other side of the question. All the estates in England and south of Scotland, and most of those possessed by the descendants of the English in Ireland, are held from ancient confiscations made of the estates of Caledonians and Britons, the original possessors in your island, or the native Irish, in the last century only. It is but a few months since, that your Parliament has, in a few instances, given up confiscations incurred by a rebellion suppressed forty years ago. The war against us was begun by a general act of Parliament, declaring all our estates confiscated; and probably one great motive to the loyalty of the royalists was the hope of sharing in these confiscations. They have played a deep game, staking their estates against ours; and they have been unsuccessful. But it is a surer game, since they had promises to rely on from your government, of indemnification in case of loss; and I see your Parliament is about to fulfil those promises. To this I have no objection, because, though still our enemies, they are men; they are in necessity; and I think even a hired assassin has a right to his pay from his employer. It seems too more reasonable, that the expense of paying these should fall upon the government who encouraged the mischief done, rather than upon us who suffered it; the confiscated estates making

amends but for a very small part of that mischief. It is not, therefore, clear, that our retaining them is chargeable with injustice.

I have hinted above, that the name *loyalist* was improperly assumed by these people. *Royalists* they may perhaps be called. But the true *loyalists* were the people of America, against whom they acted. No people were ever known more truly loyal, and universally so, to their sovereigns. The Protestant succession in the House of Hanover was their idol. Not a Jacobite was to be found from one end of the Colonies to the other. They were affectionate to the people of England, zealous and forward to assist in her wars, by voluntary contributions of men and money, even beyond their proportion. The King and Parliament had frequently acknowledged this by public messages, resolutions, and reimbursements. But they were equally fond of what they esteemed their rights; and, if they resisted when those were attacked, it was a resistance in favour of a British constitution, which every Englishman might share in enjoying, who should come to live among them; it was resisting arbitrary impositions, that were contrary to common right and to their fundamental constitutions, and to constant ancient usage. It was indeed a resistance in favour of the liberties of England, which might have been endangered by success in the attempt against ours; and therefore a great man in your Parliament¹ did not scruple to declare, he *rejoiced that America had resisted*. I, for the same reason, may add this very resistance to the other instances of their loyalty. I have already said, that I think it just you should reward those Americans, who joined your troops in the war against their own country; but, if ever

¹ The first Lord Chatham. — ED.

honesty could be inconsistent with policy, it is so in this instance. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1577. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, June 26, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you the 5th of last Month, and have since received your kind Letter of the 8th, informing me of your Welfare, and that of the dear Children, which gave me great Pleasure. I shall long to see you all again in America, where I hope to be soon. Almost all my things are now packed up, and will be in the Barge next Wednesday, to go down the River; for, though I know not yet what Vessel I shall go in, I would have every thing at Havre ready to embark; and I suppose I shall not be here myself a Fortnight longer.

I say nothing to persuade you to go with me or to follow me; because I know you do not usually act from Persuasion, but from Judgment; and, as that is very sound, I leave you to yourself. You will do what is best for you and yours, and that will give me most pleasure. Miss Lamotte's Friends do not consent to her going to England. I enclose her Letter, by which you will see, that, tho' she speaks the Language prettily, she does not write it correctly. Indeed, abundance of the French are deficient in their own Orthography. I offered her, as you desir'd, the Money that might be necessary for the Journey.

Temple is not yet quite well, having had several Returns of his Ague. Benjamin continues hearty, and has been very serviceable in Packing. They both present their Respects.

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

If you should write me a Line before my Departure, direct it to Havre de Grace. Adieu, my very dear Friend, and believe me ever yours with sincere and great Affection,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My love to every one of the Children.

1578. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Passy, July 4, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

By this Post I have given Orders to engage a fine Ship, now at London, to carry me and my Family to Philadelphia, My Baggage is already on the Seine, going down to Havre, from whence, if the Captain cannot call for us there, we shall cross the Channel, and meet him at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight. The Ship has a large, convenient Cabin, with good Lodging-Places. The whole to be at my Disposition, and there is plenty of room for you and yours. You may never have so good an Opportunity of passing to America, if it is your Intention. Think of it, and take your Resolution; believing me ever your affectionate Friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Love to the dear Children. If Mr. Williams is return'd to London, he will inform you of the particulars. If not, you may enquire of Wallace, Johnson, and Muir, Merchants, London, to be heard of at the Pensilvania Coffee-House, Birchin Lane. The Ship is to be at Cowes the 1st of August.

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

1579. TO EDWARD BRIDGEN¹ (L. C.)

Passy, July 4, 1785

DEAR SIR:—I received your favour of the 28th past.² Agreeable to your desire, I inform you that I hope to be at Havre about the 20th instant. My packages are gone down the river. Mr. Williams was to ask for my “Transactions of the Royal Society.” If he has not got them I should be obliged to you to procure and join them to those of the Antiquaries. I am not certain that I shall stay long at Havre; for if Captain Truxtun cannot call for me there, I must go over to meet the ship at the Isle of Wight, and be there by the 1st of August. This to yourself; but you may learn by a distant question at the Pennsylvania Coffee-House, for your own government, whether I am to wait at Havre for the ship, or meet her as above. The person to enquire of is Mr. Johnson, a Maryland merchant. The books, however, should be put on board that ship, directed for me at Philadelphia.

With great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1580. TO CLAUDIUS CRIGAN³ (A. P. S.)

Passy, July 5, 1785.

MY LORD,

I received the too complaisant Letter your Lordship did

¹ From “The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin” (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 139.—ED.

² In A. P. S.—ED.

³ Claudius Crigan or Criggan became Bishop of Sodor and Man in 1784, and died in 1813. He succeeded Bishop Mason. According to *Fraser's*

me the honour of writing to me by the Rev^d Mr. Christian,¹ who has also communicated some of your Views for the Benefit of Religion in the United States of America, requesting my Opinion, which I have given him, but will repeat in this Letter, lest I should not in every particular have been rightly apprehended. It is proper to be understood that those States consist of Thirteen distinct and separate Sovereignities, each govern'd by its own Laws, in which no one religious Sect is established as predominant, but there is a general Toleration of all; and should any thing be enacted by one of them in favour of a particular Sect, it would have no Operation in the others. The Congress, tho' formed by Delegates from each State chosen annually, has Powers extending only to those general Affairs of political Government that relate to the Whole, but no Authority whatever is given to them in ecclesiastical Matters. And I therefore think they will do nothing either to encourage or discourage the Introduction of a Bishop in America. For myself, I can only say as a private Person, that I think such an Officer may be of use to the Episcopalians, not only for the better Government of their Clergy, but for preventing the Expence and Risque that attend the sending their young Men to England for Ordination. He

Magazine, Vol. XXI, p. 558 (April, 1840), his character is thus sketched by a contemporary writer: —

“Of living characters it is proper to speak with caution, lest adulation or prejudice should be either seen or suspected: but we scarcely think there is one person who knows anything of this amiable prelate that will refuse him the praise of polished and conciliating manners, of sound judgment, and domestic worth. His pulpit eloquence is impressive, and his labours have not only tended to the eternal, but also to the temporal happiness of his flock. He has promoted internal peace, and taught society the blessings of unanimity and order.” — ED.

¹ Evan Christian, Vicar general of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, one of the well-known family of Christians of Milntown in the Isle of Man. — ED.

should however have Power to consecrate other Bishops, so as to prevent for ever the Necessity of sending to England for Successors in that Station, otherwise he will hardly be so well received. The great Difficulty will be to make proper Provision for his Support. I doubt whether any of the Governments will establish such Support, and I have not much Confidence that any thing considerable may be obtained by private Contributions. My Reasons are, that the Episcopalians in most of the States are very small in Number compar'd with the Inhabitants of other Persuasions; and where they are a Majority, they do not generally see the Necessity or Utility of a Resident Bishop, and they apprehend some Inconveniencies in it. Of this there was a strong Instance in Virginia some years before the late Revolution. The Inhabitants of that Province were almost wholly of the Church of England, and their House of Commons of course the same. Yet that House unanimously censured in strong Terms, the Proposition of some of their own Clergy for introducing a Bishop, and thank'd others who oppos'd & defeated the Project, as may be seen in the following Extract from their Journal, viz

Friday, July 12. 1772

“Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, That the Thanks of the House be given to the Reverend Mr. Henley, the Reverend Mr. Gwatkin, the Reverend Mr. Hewit, and the Reverend Mr. Bland for the wise and well-timed Opposition they have made to the *pernicious Project* of a few mistaken Clergymen for introducing an American Bishop; a Measure by which much Disturbance, great Anxiety and Apprehension would certainly take place among his Majesty's faithful American Subjects:

And that Mr. Richard Henry Lee and Mr. Bland do acquaint them therewith."

The Apprehension mentioned in this Resolve, I imagine must have been, an Apprehension of Expence to maintain a Bishop suitable to his Dignity, and of Attempts to oblige the Laity to defray such Expence by Taxes, or Tythes, or at least of their being solicited for voluntary Contributions: there being at present no Fund appointed for such Purpose, nor any thing hitherto given but a Farm by Legacy in Rhodisland. If however the Laity should have chang'd their Minds, and wish now to have a Bishop, whom they would engage to support by voluntary Contributions; in that case I imagine none of the Governments would forbid it, but the Support would probably be too small and too precarious to be a sufficient Encouragement.

Mr. Christian ask'd my Opinion whether your making a Tour *incognito* thro' that Country, might not be a prudent Measure? Whatever Prospect or Hope there may be of your greater Usefulness to Religion in our extensive Country than in the little Isle of Man, yet, as you have a Family, I certainly cannot advise your making any hasty Application to your Government for your Removal, or taking any Step that may hazard the loss of a present sure Support against a contingent Future and precarious. Therefore, to enable yourself to form a better Judgment, it might be well to see with your own Eyes the State of Things, and sound the Disposition of the People; but I am nevertheless inclined to think, that, in making the Tour, you will hardly be encouraged to attempt the Change, unless the Society for Propagating the Gospel, or the British Government, would fix a sufficient Income to be paid you from England. Such a Journey may, however,

contribute to establish Health, as well as pleasingly gratify the Curiosity of seeing the Progress, which the Arts, Agriculture, Science, and Industry are making in a new Country. With great Respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1581. TO GRANVILLE SHARP ¹

Passy, July 5, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received the books you were so kind as to send me by Mr. Drown.² Please to accept my hearty thanks. Your writings, which always have some public good for their object, I always read with pleasure. I am perfectly of your opinion, with respect to the salutary law of *gavelkind*, and hope it may in time be established throughout America. In six of the States, already, the lands of intestates are divided equally among the children, if all girls; but there is a double share given to the eldest son, for which I see no more reason, than giving such share to the eldest daughter; and think there should be no distinction. Since my being last in France, I have seen several of our eldest sons, spending idly their fortunes by residing in Europe and neglecting their own country; these are from the southern States. The northern young men stay at home, and are industrious, useful citizens; the more equal

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 192. Granville Sharp (1735-1813), philanthropist and pamphleteer. He started a movement for the introduction of Episcopacy into the United States. He was aided by Thomas Secker, archbishop of Canterbury, and for his efforts in this cause he received honorary degrees from Harvard and William and Mary. — ED.

² Solomon Drown, of Providence, Rhode Island, a student of medicine. — ED.

division of their fathers' fortunes not enabling them to ramble and spend their shares abroad, which is so much the better for their country.

I like your piece on the election of bishops. There is a fact in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, the latter part relating to Scotland, which shows, if my memory does not deceive me, that the first bishop in that country was elected by the clergy. I mentioned it some time past in a letter to two young men,¹ who asked my advice about obtaining ordination, which had been denied them by the bishops in England, unless they would take the oath of allegiance to the King; and I said, I imagine that unless a bishop is soon sent over with power to consecrate others, so that we may have no future occasion for applying to England for ordination, we may think it right, after reading your piece, to elect also.

The Liturgy you mention was an abridgment of that made by a noble Lord² of my acquaintance, who requested me to assist him by taking the rest of the book, viz. the Catechism and the reading and singing Psalms. These I abridged by retaining of the Catechism only the two questions, *What is your duty to God? What is your duty to your neighbour?* with answers. The Psalms were much contracted by leaving out the repetitions (of which I found more than I could have imagined), and the imprecations, which appeared not to suit well the Christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries, and doing good to enemies. The book was printed for Wilkie, in St. Paul's Church Yard, but never much noticed. Some were given away, very few sold, and I suppose the bulk became waste paper. In the prayers so much was retrenched,

¹ See the Letter to Messrs. Weems and Gant, July 18th, 1784. — ED.

² Lord Le Despencer. — ED.

that approbation could hardly be expected; but I think, with you, a moderate abridgment might not only be useful, but generally acceptable.¹

I am now on the point of departing for America where I shall be glad occasionally to hear from you, and of your welfare; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1582. TO DAVID HARTLEY ²

Passy, July 5, 1785.

I CANNOT quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear Friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow labourers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field, but having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed!* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his 80th year.

¹ On this subject Mr. Sharp had written as follows: "I have been informed, that several years ago, you revised the Liturgy of the Church of England, with a view, by some few alterations, to promote the more general use of it; but I have never yet been able to see a Copy of the form you proposed. Our present public Service is certainly, upon the whole, much too long, as it is commonly used; so that a prudent revision of it, by the common consent of the Members of the Episcopal Church in America, might be very advantageous; though, for my own part, I conceive, that the addition of one single Rubric from the Gospel would be amply sufficient to direct the advisers to the only corrections that seem to be necessary at present. I mean a *general Rule*, illustrated by proper examples, references, and marks, to warn officiating Ministers how they may avoid all useless repetitions & tautology in reading the service." — *London, June 17, 1785.* (A. P. S.) — ED.

² From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 194. — ED.

1583. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (P. C.)

Passy July 5. 1785

DEAR COUSIN

I have just receiv'd your Letter from Dublin acquainting me that you were in Treaty for a Vessel to take me in from Havre. I have already thro' Mr. Johnson agreed to go with Capt. Truxton, who is to meet me at Cowes; so that an Agreement with any other is needless. I am nevertheless oblig'd by your kind Attention. We are to be at Cowes and sail from thence the first of August. I hope your Affairs will allow your joining us there. It is a fine Ship of 400 Tons with excellent Accommodations for Passengers. Our Luggage is gone down the River and we follow in a few Days. Your Family was well on Sunday. I am ever

Your affectionate Uncle

B. FRANKLIN

1584. TO COMTE DE SALMES (U. OF P.)

Passy, July 5. 1785.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me some time since, respecting the Application of Keys to the Harmonica as contriv'd by Abbé Perno; and requesting to know if any thing of the kind had been done at Paris, London or elsewhere. When I was in London, about 12 years since, M^r Steele an ingenious Musician there, made an Attempt

¹ From the original in the possession of Louis A. Biddle, Esq.—ED.

of that sort; but the Tones were with Difficulty produc'd by the Touch from the Keys, and the Machinery in Playing made so much Noise and Rattle, as to diminish greatly the Pleasure given by the Sound of the Glasses; so that I think the Instrument was never compleated. The Duchess of —— at Paris about the same time endeavour'd to obtain the same End, and has not yet laid aside the Project, tho' it has not hitherto perfectly succeeded. Baron Feriet of Versailles, began to work on the same Idea about the Time I receiv'd your Letter; and as he is a very ingenious Man, & has a hand to execute as well as a head to contrive the necessary Machinery, I hoped soon to have given you an Account of his Success: but I begin to doubt it, as I have nothing from him lately. In my Manner of Playing on my Instrument the Fingers are capable of Touching with great Delicacy; and the Glasses hum so smoothly, that one hears no other Sound but that given by the touch. If the Instrument of Abbé Perno has the same Advantages, its being play'd with Keys gives it an undoubted Preference, and I should be glad to know the Construction.

I should be happy if I had any thing to send to the Academy worthy its Acceptance. My Occupations have for some Years past, prevented my Attention to philosophical Subjects. I can only wish Success to its laudable Pursuits; and beg you to believe me, with sincere Esteem

Sir,
B. FRANKLIN.

1585. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (B. M.)

Passy, July 9, '85.

MR. Franklin presents his Compliments to Commodore Jones, and sends him what Papers can now be found respecting his Affairs. The Correspondence with the Ministers of Denmark being pack'd up and gone; but that is not very material.

Mr. F's best Wishes attend you.

1586. TO CHARLES-JOSEPH MATHON DE LA
COUR¹ (A. P. S.)

Passy, July 9, 1785.

SIR,

I have received the letter, which you did me the honour to write in the name of the Academy of the city of Lyons. I accept with gratitude the title, with which this learned Society is kind enough to honour me. I have long been acquainted with its useful labours. I should be most happy to live near it, and reap the benefit of its instruction. But, being on the eve of my departure for America, I must add this also to the many sources of regret, which the kindness of the French calls forth in my heart. I shall never forget what I owe to them, still less what I owe to your Academy, to the members of which I beg you to present my respectful acknowledgments.

I thank you, Sir, for your Dissertation on the Laws of Ly-

¹ From a French copy in A. P. S. — ED.

curgus, and your *Testament de fortuné Ricard*.¹ With the latter work I was already acquainted. I had read it with pleasure, and conceived a high opinion of its author. I have just read your Dissertation. If my own approbation could add any thing to that of the celebrated Academy, which has awarded to you the prize, I should tell you, that I have been highly gratified, and that I only regret I can give you no other prize, than the sentiments of regard and respect, with which I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1587. TO MRS. JANE MECOM² (P. C.)

St. Germain, 12 Miles from Paris, July 13, '85.

DEAR SISTER

I left Passy, yesterday afternoon, and am here in my Way to Havre de Grace a Seaport, in order to embark for America. I make use of one of the King's Litters carried by Mules, who walk steadily and easily, so that I bear the Motion very well. I am to be taken on board a Philadelphia Ship on the Coast of England, (Capt. Truxton) the beginning of next Month. Not having written to you since that which contain'd a Bill for you on M^r Vernon, and as I may not have another Opportunity before my Arrival in Philadelphia, (if it pleases God I do arrive) I write these Particulars to go by way of England, that you may be less uneasy about me. I did my last public Act in this Country just before I set out, which was signing a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Prussia.

¹ A translation of this curious piece was published by Dr. Price in London, as an Appendix to his *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution*. — ED.

² From the original in the possession of Mr. E. B. Holden. — ED.

I have continu'd to work till late in the Day : tis time I should go home, and go to Bed.

My Love to your Daughter and to Cousin Williams, & believe me ever, my dear Sister,

Your Affectionate Brother

B. FRANKLIN.

Tho' going to my own Country, I leave this with Regret having receiv'd so much Kindness in it, from all Ranks of People. Temple and Benjamin are with me, and send their dutiful Respects.

1588. TO MADAME HELVÉTIUS¹ (B. N.)

Au Havre, ce 19 Juillet, '85.

Nous arrivar[m]ons ici, ma très chere amie, hier au soir bien heureusement. Je n'étois pas fatigué du tout. Je me trouvois mieux même qu'avant mon Depart. Nous resterons ici quelque jour pour nos Baggages & pour notre Compagnon de Voyage M. Houdon. A leur Arrivée, nous quitterons la France, la Païs du *monde que j'aime* le plus; & j'y laisserois *ma chere* Helvetia. Elle y peut être heureux. Je *ne suis sur d'etre heureux* in Amerique; mais il faut que je m'y rende. Il me semble que les choses sont mal arrangés dans ce bas monde, quand je vais que les êtres si faites pour etre heureux *ensemble sont obligés* à se separer.

J'ai trouvé tant de Difficultes dans ma Projet de passer de Rouen ici par Eau, que j'étois fort aise de l'avoir obtenu du

¹ It should perhaps be noted that the letters to Madame Helvétius were written by Franklin without correction, and they show what his "having" in French really was. — ED.

bon Duc de Coigny la permission de continuer en Litiere. Dites a les Abbés, les bons Abbés, les choses pour moi, *pleins d'Amitié*. Je ne vous dis pas que je vous aime. On me diroit qu'il n'y a rien d'extraordinaire ni point de merite en ça, parceque tous le monde vous aime, J'espere seulement que vous m'aimerez toujours un peu. Je suis interromper par des Visites. Avant de partir je vous dirai mes dernieres Adieux.

B. FRANKLIN.

1589. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN¹

Southampton, 8 o'clock, A. M., July 24, 1785

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I am this minute arrived here with my family from Havre de Grace; and shall stay here till Captain Truxtun arrives at Cowes to take us in.² I write this line, just to inform you, that

¹ First printed by Sparks, Vol. X, p. 217. — ED.

² Thomas Truxtun, distinguished in the naval annals of the United States, was born on Long Island, February 17th, 1755. He manifested an early predilection for the sea, and made his first voyage when he was twelve years old. During a part of the Revolution he commanded several private armed vessels, in which he was successful in annoying the enemy's commerce, particularly on the coast of England. He signalized himself for courage and skill in two or three engagements. When the navy was revived, on the prospect of a war with France, in 1794, Truxtun was one of the six captains first nominated by Washington to the Senate. He superintended the building of the frigate *Constellation*, with which, and a small squadron under his command, he was employed in protecting the American commerce in the West Indies. It was here that he fought his celebrated action with the French frigate *Insurgente*, on the 9th of February, 1799. After an engagement of an hour and a quarter the *Insurgente* struck her colors. This vessel carried forty guns, and four hundred and seventeen men; of whom twenty-nine were killed and forty-four wounded. The *Constellation* carried thirty-six guns, and had but one man killed and two wounded. The gallantry displayed by Commodore Truxtun on this occasion was highly applauded. — S.

I bore the journey to Havre, in one of the King's litters, very well, and the voyage also from thence hither in forty-five hours, though the wind was a great part of the time contrary. I shall be glad of a line from you, acquainting me whether you ever received two pieces I sent you some months since; one on your penal laws, the other an account of the residence of an English seaman in China.¹ As you commonly said something to me concerning the things I used to send you, I apprehend you either have not received these, or do not like them. If you have any thing to say by me to your friends in America, send it, and I will take care to deliver it. Adieu, my dearest friend. I am ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN:

1590. TO RUELLAN & CO.² (L. C.)

Southampton, July 25, 1785.

DEAR SIR:— We arrived here yesterday Morning about 8 o'Clock. I was not in the least incommoded by the Voyage, but M. Le Veillard and my Grandsons were all very sick upon the Passage, tho' now recover'd and well.

Capt. Jennings staying here till to-morrow Morning, and having heard since my coming here that the ship has sailed from London, I begin to fear it will be impossible for him to return in time with the rest of my Baggage, supposing it to be now at Havre.

I have forwarded your Letter of Credit to Messrs. Thellusson,³ and ask'd them to give me a Credit here for Fifty

¹ See *supra*, p. 200. — ED.

² Bankers at Havre. — ED.

³ Peter Thellusson, Sons & Co., bankers in London. — ED.

Guineas, if I should want so much, but as my Stay is like to be very short, I know not yet whether I shall have occasion to make any use of it. I am nevertheless extremely sensible of the Kindness and Generosity of your Proceeding in that Letter, as well as in every other Point of your Friendly Entertainment and good Offices at Havre, and the Provision you laid in for us. I can at present only offer in return my thankfull Acknowledgments, requesting that if at any time I can be of any use to you in America, or to any Friend of yours, you would be so good as to command me freely. Be pleased to present my respectful Compliments to good Mad^e Ruellan. I hope the Children are better.

I write to Mr. Limozin,¹ desiring him to forward my Goods by the Pacquet, in Case the next sails from Havre, as has been said, and no Vessel offers sooner that goes directly to Philadelphia. If I remember right, the Regulations of the Pacquets forbid their taking heavy Goods, but I suppose you may be able to obtain Permission for mine, which will be an additional Favour. With great Esteem, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN

1591. TO JEAN HOLKER

(L. C.)

Southampton, July 25, 1785

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I know it will give you and good Mrs. Holker Pleasure, to learn that we arrived safe and well here yesterday Morning, neither the Journey by Land nor Voyage by sea having incommoded me in the least. I have given you abundance of Trouble with my little Affairs, and am loth to

¹ André Limozin, Havre banker, and United States agent for prizes. — ED.

give you any more, but cannot well avoid requesting you would be so kind as to show the inclos'd Account to Mr. Garvey when he returns to Rouen, and represent to him that the Charge his Nephew makes of Commissions, three Livres per Box, only for the Care of having my 128 Boxes mov'd out of one Boat into another, appears to me exorbitant, amounting to 390 Livres, near as much as the Expence of bringing them from Paris to Rouen, and three times as much as has been demanded of me for their Freight between Havre and Cowes, loading and discharging included. If Mr. Garvey confirms the Charge, which I think he hardly will, let him say so at the Bottom of the Account, and then send it with this Letter to Mr. Grand, whom I hereby desire and authorize to pay it; because I would not leave any just Claim upon me remaining in France; tho' I should wish to know if there are any Circumstances I am unacquainted with that can make such a Charge appear reasonable. God bless you both, my dear Friends, and believe me ever, with a Heart deeply sensible of all your kindness, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1592. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Southampton, July 25, 1785

DEAR SIR: — I wrote a few lines to you per Post yesterday morning, to acquaint you with my Arrival here, not in the least incommoded by the Journey and Voyage, but rather better than I have been for a long time since.

Our Goods that were sent down the River had not arrived at Havre when we left that Place, and as I learn here that our

Ship was at Gravesend the 22d. and expected to be in the Downs yesterday evening, she may be here to-morrow, so that I now almost despair of getting them at Cowes in time to go in her, and they must be forwarded in the August Pacquet if that sails from Havre, or wait some other Opportunity. To me the Disappointment will not be much, as the things I most immediately want came down by the Roulier, and are with me, but Mr. Houdon will be at a loss for his Clay, etc. Mr. Limozin has the Care of receiving and forwarding our things; but the Business not being finish'd I could not settle the Account with him, but have directed him to exhibit it to you, and I desire you would pay it. The Person who manages Mr. Garvey's Business in his absence has made a heavy Charge against me as his Commission. I have sent the Account to Mr. Holker, desiring he would show it to Mr. Garvey on his Return and acquaint him that I think that Charge enormous; but if he confirms it, then to send the account to you with my Letter in which I desire you to pay it.

To assist my Grandson in a Purchase he is making of his Father now here, perhaps I may draw on you in favour of the Father for Forty-eight thousand Livres, at 30 Days' Sight; in which Case I would have you to sell Six of my Actions of the Caisse d'Escompte, and add to the Product of that sale as much out of the Ballance of my Account now in your hands as will make up the sum of 48,000 Livres.

My best Wishes attend you and yours, being with sincere esteem, Dear Sir, your most obliged Friend and humble Serv^t,

B. FRANKLIN.

1593. TO ANDRÉ LIMOZIN (L. C.)

Southampton, July 25, 1785.

SIR:—We arrived here on Sunday morning about 7 o'clock. I was not in the least incommoded by the voyage, but my children and my friend Mr. Veillard were very sick.

I have just learned that our ship was at Gravesend the 22nd and expected to be in the Downs yesterday, and therefore may be here sooner than was at first proposed, so that I have now no hopes of the goods being here in time to go in her. I therefore hereby desire you would forward them to New York in the packet, in case a packet sails from Havre next month, as has been proposed, and you have no vessel to sail directly for Philadelphia. The packets are indeed by the original regulations not allowed to take heavy goods upon freight, but I am persuaded Mr. Ruellan will at your request obtain the permission. I write to Mr. Grand to pay your account against me for disbursements and commission. And I desire you besides to accept my thankful acknowledgments. My best wishes attend you and your amiable daughter, being with great regard, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1594. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Southampton, July 26, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received here yours of the 23d Instant. I am sorry it did not suit you to go in the Ship with me, having engaged Places

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

in the Cabin, that would have accommodated you and yours, not indeed on your Account, because I never depended on your going; but I took the whole Cabin, that I might not be intruded on by any accidental disagreeable Company.

If you come to Philadelphia, you will find an always affectionate Friend in me, and in my Children after I am gone. My Love to yours, and to Dolly; and my Respects to Mrs. Hawkesworth. I came to Havre de Grace in a Litter, and hither in the Pacquet-Boat; and, instead of being hurt by the Journey or Voyage, I really find myself very much better, not having suffer'd so little for the time these two Years past.

Adieu, my dear Friend; accept my repeated Thanks for the agreeable Winter your kind Company, with that of my young Friends, made me pass, and believe me ever yours sincerely and most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1595. TO J. COAKLEY LETTSOM¹

Southampton, July 26, 1785

DEAR SIR: — I received your kind letter, and the valuable present of Dr. Fothergill's Works; for which please to accept my grateful acknowledgments. I purpose, on my voyage, to write the remaining notes of my life, which you desire, and to send them to you on my arrival. You have done a good deed in contributing to promote science among us, by your liberal donation of books to Carlisle College. Thanks for your good wishes in favour of our country, and of your friend and servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 155. — ED.

1596. TO MADAME HELVÉTIUS (B. N.)

À Southampton, 27 Juillet 1785
En Angleterre, pres l'Isle de Wight.

Notre Vaisseau arrivait ici hier de Londres. Aujourd'hui nous nous embarquerons. Adieu, ma très très très chere Amie, Souhaitez pour nous bon Voyage, & dites aux bons Abbés de prier pour nous, *cela etant leur Metier*. Je me trouve tres bien. Si j'arrive en Amerique vous aurez bientôt de mes Nouvelles. Je vous aimerai toujours, pense quelque-fois de moi, & ecrires quelquefois a

Votre B. F.

Mes Enfans presentans leurs Respects.

1597. TO DAVID LE ROY¹

MARITIME OBSERVATIONS

At Sea, on board the London Packet,
Capt. Truxton, August 1785.

SIR,

Your learned writings on the navigation of the antients, which contain a great deal of curious information; and your

¹ This letter was translated into French, and published at Paris in the year 1787, entitled, "*Lettre de Monsieur Benjamin Franklin à Monsieur David Le Roy, Membre de Plusieurs Académies, &c.*" The following note is prefixed by the French editor. — "Cette lettre a été lue à la Société Philosophique Américaine de Philadelphia, le 2 Décembre, 1785. Elle est imprimée dans les Mémoires de cette Société. On lit dans le titre, à *M. Alphonse Le Roy*. Comme cet Académicien ne se nomme pas Alphonse, nous y avons substitué l'un de ses noms de baptême. Il est de l'Académie des Belles-Lettres, de celle de Marine, de la Société des Antiquaires de Londres, de la Société Philosophique Américaine, &c." It is here printed from "Transactions of The American Philosophical Society," Vol. II (1786), p. 294. — ED.

very ingenious contrivances for improving the modern sails (*voilure*), of which I saw with great pleasure a successful trial on the river Seine, have induced me to submit to your consideration and judgment, some thoughts I have had on the latter subject.

Those mathematicians who have endeavoured to improve the swiftness of vessels by calculating to find the form of least resistance, seem to have considered a ship as a body moving through one fluid only, the water; and to have given little attention to the circumstance of her moving through another fluid, the air. It is true, that, when a vessel sails right before the wind, this circumstance is of no importance, because the wind goes with her; but, in every deviation from that course, the resistance of the air is something, and becomes greater in proportion as that deviation increases. I wave at present the consideration of those different degrees of resistance given by the air to that part of the hull which is above water, and confine myself to that given to the sails; for their motion through the air is resisted by the air, as the motion of the hull through the water is resisted by the water, though with less force as the air is a lighter fluid. And, to simplify the discussion as much as possible, I would state one situation only, to wit, that of the wind upon the beam, the ship's course being directly across the wind; and I would suppose the sail set in an angle of forty-five degrees with the keel, as in the following figure; wherein (Plate XII. Fig. 1,) *A B* represents the body of the vessel, *C D* the position of the sail, *E E E* the direction of the wind, *M M* the line of motion. In observing this figure it will appear, that so much of the body of the vessel as is immersed in the water must, to go forward, remove out of its way what water it meets with between the pricked lines

F F. And the sail, to go forward, must move out of its way all the air its whole dimension meets with between the pricked lines *C G* and *D G*. Thus both the fluids give resistance to the motion, each in proportion to the quantity of matter contained in the dimension to be removed. And though the air is vastly lighter than the water, and therefore more easily removed, yet, the dimension being much greater, its effect is very considerable.

It is true, that, in the case stated, the resistance given by the air between those lines to the motion of the sail is not apparent to the eye, because the greater force of the wind, which strikes it in the direction *E E E*, overpowers its effect, and keeps the sail full in the curve *a, a, a, a, a*. But suppose the wind to cease, and the vessel in a calm to be impelled with the same swiftness by oars, the sail would then appear filled in the contrary curve *b, b, b, b, b*, when prudent men would immediately perceive, that the air resisted its motion, and would order it to be taken in.

Is there any possible means of diminishing this resistance, while the same quantity of sail is exposed to the action of the wind, and therefore the same force obtained from it? I think there is, and that it may be done by dividing the sail into a number of parts, and placing those parts in a line one behind the other; thus instead of one sail extending from *C* to *D*, figure 2, if four sails, containing together the same quantity of canvass, were placed as in figure 3, each having one quarter of the dimensions of the great sail, and exposing a quarter of its surface to the wind, would give a quarter of the force; so that the whole force obtained from the wind would be the same, while the resistance from the air would be nearly reduced to the space between the pricked lines *a b* and *c d*, before the foremost sail.

It may perhaps be doubted whether the resistance from the air would be so diminished; since possibly each of the following small sails having also air before it, which must be removed, the resistance on the whole would be the same.

This is then a matter to be determined by experiment. I will mention one, that I many years since made with success for another purpose; and I will propose another small one easily made. If that too succeeds, I should think it worth while to make a larger, though at some expence, on a river boat; and perhaps time and the improvements experience will afford, may make it applicable with advantage to larger vessels.

Having near my kitchen chimney a round hole of eight inches diameter, through which was a constant steady current of air, increasing or diminishing only as the fire increased or diminished, I contrived to place my jack so as to receive that current; and taking off the flyers, I fixed in their stead on the same pivot a round tin plate of nearly the same diameter with the hole; and having cut it in radial lines almost to the centre, so as to have six equal vanes, I gave to each of them the obliquity of forty-five degrees. They moved round, without the weight, by the impression only of the current of air, but too slowly for the purpose of roasting. I suspected that the air struck by the back of each vane might possibly by its resistance retard the motion; and to try this, I cut each of them into two, and I placed the twelve, each having the same obliquity, in a line behind each other, when I perceived a great augmentation in its velocity, which encouraged me to divide them once more, and, continuing the same obliquity, I placed the twenty-four behind each other in a line, when the force of the wind being the same, and the surface of vane the same,

they moved round with much greater rapidity, and perfectly answered my purpose.

The second experiment that I propose, is, to take two playing cards of the same dimensions, and cut one of them transversely into eight equal pieces; then with a needle string them upon two threads, one near each end, and place them so upon the threads that, when hung up, they may be one exactly over the other, at a distance equal to their breadth, each in a horizontal position; and let a small weight, such as a bird-shot, be hung under them, to make them fall in a straight line when let loose. Suspend also the whole card by threads from its four corners, and hang to it an equal weight, so as to draw it downwards when let fall, its whole breadth pressing against the air. Let those two bodies be attached, one of them to one end of a thread a yard long, the other to the other end. Extend a twine under the ceiling of a room, and put through it at thirty inches distance two pins bent in the form of fish-hooks. On these two hooks hang the two bodies, the thread that connects them extending parallel to the twine, which thread being cut, they must begin to fall at the same instant. If they take equal time in falling to the floor, it is a proof that the resistance of the air is in both cases equal. If the whole card requires a longer time, it shows that the sum of the resistances to the pieces of the cut card is not equal to the resistance of the whole one.¹

This principle so far confirmed, I would proceed to make a larger experiment, with a shallop, which I would rig in this manner. (Plate XII. Fig. 4.) *A B* is a long boom,

¹ The motion of the vessel made it convenient to try this simple experiment at sea, when the proposal of it was written. But it has been tried since we came on shore, and succeeded as the other. — F.

from which are hoisted seven jibs, *a, b, c, d, e, f, g*, each a seventh part of the whole dimensions, and as much more as will fill the whole space when set in an angle of forty-five degrees, so that they may lap when going before the wind, and hold more wind when going large. Thus rigged, when going right before the wind, the boom should be brought at right angles with the keel, by means of the sheet ropes *C D*, and all the sails hauled flat to the boom.

These positions of boom and sails to be varied as the wind quarters. But when the wind is on the beam, or when you would turn to windward, the boom is to be hauled right fore and aft, and the sails trimmed according as the wind is more or less against your course.

It seems to me, that the management of a shallop so rigged would be very easy, the sails being run up and down separately, so that more or less sail may be made at pleasure; and I imagine, that there being full as much sail exposed to the force of the wind which impels the vessel in its course, as if the whole were in one piece, and the resistance of the dead air against the foreside of the sail being diminished, the advantage of swiftness would be very considerable; besides that the vessel would lie nearer the wind.

Since we are on the subject of improvements in navigation, permit me to detain you a little longer with a small relative observation. Being, in one of my voyages, with ten merchant ships under convoy of a frigate at anchor in Torbay, waiting for a wind to go to the westward, it came fair, but brought in with it a considerable swell. A signal was given for weighing, and we put to sea all together; but three of the ships left their anchors, their cables parting just as the anchors came a-peak. Our cable held, and we got up our anchor; but the

shocks the ship felt before the anchor got loose from the ground, made me reflect on what might possibly have caused the breaking of the other cables; and I imagined it might be the short bending of the cable just without the hawse-hole, from a horizontal to an almost vertical position, and the sudden violent jerk it receives by the rising of the head of the ship on the swell of a wave while in that position. For example, suppose a vessel hove up so as to have her head nearly over her anchor, which still keeps its hold, perhaps in a tough bottom; if it were calm, the cable still out would form nearly a perpendicular line, measuring the distance between the hause-hole and the anchor; but if there is a swell, her head in the trough of the sea will fall below the level, and when lifted on the wave will be much above it. In the first case the cable will hang loose and bend perhaps as in figure 5. In the second case, figure 6, the cable will be drawn straight with a jerk, must sustain the whole force of the rising ship, and must either loosen the anchor, resist the rising force of the ship, or break. But why does it break at the hause-hole?

Let us suppose it a cable of three inches diameter, and represented by figure 7. If this cable is to be bent round the corner *A*, it is evident that either the part of the triangle contained between the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, must stretch considerably, and those most that are nearest the surface; or that the parts between *d*, *e*, *f*, must be compressed; or both, which most probably happens. In this case, the lower half of the thickness affords no strength against the jerk, it not being strained, the upper half bears the whole, and the yarns near the upper surface being first and most strained, break first, and the next yarns follow; for in this bent situation they cannot bear the strain all together, and each contribute its strength to the

whole, as they do when the cable is strained in a straight line.

To remedy this, methinks it would be well to have a kind of large pulley wheel, fixed in the hause-hole, suppose of two feet diameter, over which the cable might pass; and, being there bent gradually to the round of the wheel, would thereby be more equally strained, and better able to bear the jerk, which may save the anchor, and by that means in the course of the voyage may happen to save the ship.

One maritime observation more shall finish this letter. I have been a reader of newspapers now near seventy years, and I think few years pass without an account of some vessel met with at sea, with no living soul on board, and so many feet of water in her hold, which vessel has nevertheless been saved and brought into port; and when not met with at sea, such forsaken vessels have often come ashore on some coast. The crews, who have taken to their boats and thus abandoned such vessels, are sometimes met with and taken up at sea by other ships, sometimes reach a coast, and are sometimes never heard of. Those that give an account of quitting their vessels generally say, that she sprung a leak, that they pumped for some time, that the water continued to rise upon them, and that, despairing to save her, they had quitted her, lest they should go down with her. It seems by the event that this fear was not always well founded, and I have endeavoured to guess at the reason of the people's too hasty discouragement.

When a vessel springs a leak near her bottom, the water enters with all the force given by the weight of the column of water without, which force is in proportion to the difference of level between the water without and that within. It enters

therefore with more force at first and in greater quantity, than it can afterwards when the water within is higher. The bottom of the vessel too is narrower, so that the same quantity of water coming into that narrow part, rises faster than when the space for it to flow in is larger. This helps to terrify. But, as the quantity entering is less and less as the surfaces without and within become more nearly equal in height, the pumps, that could not keep the water from rising at first, might afterwards be able to prevent its rising higher, and the people might have remained on board in safety, without hazarding themselves in an open boat on the wide ocean. (Fig. 8.)

Besides the greater equality in the height of the two surfaces, there may sometimes be other causes that retard the farther sinking of a leaky vessel. The rising water within may arrive at quantities of light wooden work, empty chests, and particularly empty water-casks, which if fixed so as not to float themselves may help to sustain her. Many bodies which compose a ship's cargo may be specifically lighter than water; all these when out of water are an additional weight to that of the ship, and she is in proportion pressed deeper into the water; but, as soon as these bodies are immersed, they weigh no longer on the ship, but on the contrary, if fixed, they help to support her, in proportion as they are specifically lighter than the water. And it should be remembered, that the largest body of a ship may be so balanced in the water, that an ounce less or more of weight may leave her at the surface or sink her to the bottom. There are also certain heavy cargoes, that, when the water gets at them, are continually dissolving, and thereby lightening the vessel, such as salt and sugar. And as to water-casks, mentioned above, since the

quantity of them must be great in ships of war, where the number of men consume a great deal of water every day, if it had been made a constant rule to bung them up as fast as they were emptied, and to dispose the empty casks in proper situations, I am persuaded that many ships which have been sunk in engagements, or have gone down afterwards, might with the unhappy people have been saved; as well as many of those which in the last war foundered, and were never heard of. While on this topic of sinking, one cannot help recollecting the well-known practice of the Chinese, to divide the hold of a great ship into a number of separate chambers by partitions tight caulked (of which you gave a model in your boat upon the Seine), so that, if a leak should spring in one of them, the others are not affected by it; and, though that chamber should fill to a level with the sea, it would not be sufficient to sink the vessel. We have not imitated this practice. Some little disadvantage it might occasion in the stowage, is perhaps one reason, though that I think might be more than compensated by an abatement in the insurance that would be reasonable, and by a higher price taken of passengers, who would rather prefer going in such a vessel. But our seafaring people are brave, despise danger, and reject such precautions of safety, being cowards only in one sense, that of *fearing to be thought afraid*.

I promised to finish my letter with the last observation, but the garrulity of the old man has got hold of me, and, as I may never have another occasion of writing on this subject, I think I may as well now, once for all, empty my nautical budget, and give you all the thoughts that have in my various long voyages occurred to me relating to navigation. I am sure, that in you they will meet with a candid judge,

who will excuse my mistakes on account of my good intention.

There are six accidents, that may occasion the loss of ships at sea. We have considered one of them, that of foundering by a leak. The other five are, 1. Oversetting by sudden flaws of wind, or by carrying sail beyond the bearing. 2. Fire by accident or carelessness. 3. A heavy stroke of lightning, making a breach in the ship, or firing the powder. 4. Meeting and shocking with other ships in the night. 5. Meeting in the night with islands of ice.

To that of oversetting, privateers in their first cruise have, as far as has fallen within my knowledge or information, been more subject than any other kind of vessels. The double desire of being able to overtake a weaker flying enemy, or to escape when pursued by a stronger, has induced the owners to overmast their cruisers, and to spread too much canvas; and the great number of men, many of them not seamen, who, being upon deck when a ship heels suddenly, are huddled down to leeward, and increase by their weight the effect of the wind. This therefore should be more attended to and guarded against, especially as the advantage of lofty masts is problematical. For the upper sails have greater power to lay a vessel more on her side, which is not the most advantageous position for going swiftly through the water. And hence it is, that vessels, which have lost their lofty masts, and been able to make little more sail afterwards than permitted the ship to sail upon an even keel, have made so much way, even under jury masts, as to surprise the mariners themselves. But there is, besides, something in the modern form of our ships, that seems as if calculated expressly to allow their oversetting more easily. The sides of a ship, instead of

spreading out as they formerly did in the upper works, are of late years turned in, so as to make the body nearly round, and more resembling a cask. I do not know what the advantages of this construction are, except that such ships are not easily boarded. To me it seems a contrivance to have less room in a ship at nearly the same expense. For it is evident, that the same timber and plank consumed in raising the sides from *a* to *b*, and from *d* to *c*, would have raised them from *a* to *e*, and from *d* to *f*, fig. 9. In this form all the spaces between *e*, *a*, *b*, and *c*, *d*, *f*, would have been gained, the deck would have been larger, the men would have had more room to act, and not have stood so thick in the way of the enemy's shot; and the vessel, the more she was laid down on her side, the more bearing she would meet with, and more effectual to support her, as being farther from the centre. Whereas, in the present form, her ballast makes the chief part of her bearing, without which she would turn in the sea almost as easily as a barrel. More ballast by this means becomes necessary, and that, sinking a vessel deeper in the water, occasions more resistance to her going through it. The Bermudian sloops still keep with advantage to the old spreading form.

The islanders in the great Pacific ocean, though they have no large ships, are the most expert boat-sailors in the world, navigating that sea safely with their proas, which they prevent oversetting by various means. Their sailing proas for this purpose have outriggers generally to windward, above the water, on which, one or more men are placed, to move occasionally further from or nearer to the vessel as the wind freshens or slackens. But some have their outriggers to leeward, which, resting on the water, support the boat so as to keep her upright when pressed down by the wind. Their

boats, moved by oars or rather by paddles, are, for long voyages, fixed two together by cross bars of wood that keep them at some distance from each other, and so render their oversetting next to impossible. How far this may be practicable in larger vessels, we have not yet sufficient experience. I know of but one trial made in Europe, which was about one hundred years since, by Sir William Petty. He built a double vessel, to serve as a packet-boat between England and Ireland. Her model still exists in the museum of the Royal Society, where I have seen it. By the accounts we have of her, she answered well the purpose of her construction, making several voyages; and, though wrecked at last by a storm, the misfortune did not appear owing to her particular construction, since many other vessels of the common form were wrecked at the same time. The advantage of such a vessel is, that she needs no ballast, therefore swims either lighter or will carry more goods; and that passengers are not so much incommoded by her rolling; to which may be added, that if she is to defend herself by her cannon, they will probably have more effect, being kept more generally in a horizontal position, than those in common vessels. I think, however, that it would be an improvement of that model, to make the sides which are opposed to each other perfectly parallel, though the other sides are formed as in common, thus, figure 10.

The building of a double ship would indeed be more expensive in proportion to her burthen; and that perhaps is sufficient to discourage the method.

The accident of fire is generally well guarded against by the prudent captain's strict orders against smoking between decks, or carrying a candle there out of a lantern. But there is one

dangerous practice which frequent terrible accidents have not yet been sufficient to abolish; that of carrying store spirits to sea in casks. Two large ships, the *Seraphis* and the *Duke of Athol*, one an East Indiaman, the other a frigate, have been burnt within these two last years, and many lives miserably destroyed, by drawing spirits out of a cask near a candle. It is high time to make it a general rule, that all the ship's store of spirits should be carried in bottles.

The misfortune by a stroke of lightning I have in my former writings endeavoured to show a method of guarding against, by a chain and pointed rod, extending, when run up, from above the top of the mast to the sea. These instruments are now made and sold at a reasonable price by *Nairne & Co.* in London, and there are several instances of success attending the use of them. They are kept in a box, and may be run up and fixed in about five minutes, on the apparent approach of a thunder-gust.

Of the meeting and shocking with other ships in the night, I have known two instances in voyages between London and America. In one, both ships arrived, though much damaged, each reporting their belief that the other most have gone to the bottom. In the other, only one got to port; the other was never afterwards heard of. These instances happened many years ago, when the commerce between Europe and America was not a tenth part of what it is at present, ships of course thinner scattered, and the chance of meeting proportionably less. It has long been the practice to keep a *look-out before* in the channel, but at sea it has been neglected. If it is not at present thought worth while to take that precaution, it will in time become of more consequence; since the number of ships at sea is continually augmenting. A drum frequently

beat, or a bell rung in a dark night, might help to prevent such accidents.

Islands of ice are frequently seen off the banks of Newfoundland by ships going between North America and Europe. In the day time they are easily avoided, unless in a very thick fog. I remember two instances of ships running against them in the night. The first lost her bowsprit, but received little other damage. The other struck where the warmth of the sea had wasted the ice next to it, and a part hung over above. This perhaps saved her, for she was under great way; but the upper part of the cliff, taking her foretopmast, broke the shock, though it carried away the mast. She disengaged herself with some difficulty, and got safe into port; but the accident shows the possibility of other ships being wrecked and sunk by striking those vast masses of ice, of which I have seen one that we judged to be seventy feet high above the water, consequently eight times as much under water; and it is another reason for keeping a good *look-out before*, though far from any coast that may threaten danger.

It is remarkable, that the people we consider as savages, have improved the art of sailing and rowing boats in several points beyond what we can pretend to.

We have no sailing boats equal to the flying proas of the South Seas, no rowing or paddling boat equal to that of the Greenlanders, for swiftness and safety. The birch canoes of the North American Indians have also some advantageous properties. They are so light that two men may carry one of them over land, which is capable of carrying a dozen upon the water; and in heeling they are not so subject to take in water as our boats, the sides of which are lowest in the middle where it is most likely to enter, this being highest in that part, as in figure 11.

The Chinese are an enlightened people, the most antiently civilized of any existing, and their arts are antient, a presumption in their favour; their method of rowing their boats differs from ours, the oars being worked either two a-stern, as we scull, or on the sides with the same kind of motion, being hung parallel to the keel on a rail, and always acting in the water, not perpendicular to the side, as ours are, nor lifted out at every stroke, which is a loss of time, and the boat in the interval loses motion. They see our manner, and we theirs, but neither are disposed to learn of or copy the other.

To the several means of moving boats mentioned above, may be added the singular one lately exhibited at Javelle, on the Seine below Paris, where a clumsy boat was moved across that river in three minutes by rowing, not in the water, but in the air, that is, by whirling round a set of windmill vanes fixed to a horizontal axis, parallel to the keel, and placed at the head of the boat. The axis was bent into an elbow at the end, by the help of which it was turned by one man at a time. I saw the operation at a distance. The four vanes appeared to be about five feet long, and perhaps two and a half wide. The weather was calm. The labour appeared to be great for one man, as the two several times relieved each other. But the action upon the air by the oblique surfaces of the vanes must have been considerable, as the motion of the boat appeared tolerably quick going and returning; and she returned to the same place from whence she first set out, notwithstanding the current. This machine is since applied to the moving of air-balloons: An instrument similar may be contrived to move a boat by turning under water.

Several mechanical projectors have at different times proposed to give motion to boats, and even to ships, by means of

circular rowing, or paddles placed on the circumference of wheels to be turned constantly on each side of the vessel; but this method, though frequently tried, has never been found so effectual as to encourage a continuance of the practice. I do not know that the reason has hitherto been given. Perhaps it may be this, that great part of the force employed contributes little to the motion. For instance, (fig. 12) of the four paddles *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, all under water, and turning to move a boat from *X* to *Y*, *c* has the most power, *b* nearly though not quite as much, their motion being nearly horizontal; but the force employed in moving *a*, is consumed in pressing almost down-right upon the water till it comes to the place of *b*; and the force employed in moving *d* is consumed in lifting the water till *d* arrives at the surface; by which means much of the labour is lost. It is true, that by placing the wheels higher out of the water, this waste labour will be diminished in a calm, but where a sea runs, the wheels must unavoidably be often dipped deep in the waves, and the turning of them thereby rendered very laborious to little purpose.

Among the various means of giving motion to a boat, that of M. Bernoulli appears one of the most singular, which was to have fixed in the boat a tube in the form of an L, the upright part to have a funnel-kind of opening at top, convenient for filling the tube with water; which, descending and passing through the lower horizontal part, and issuing in the middle of the stern, but under the surface of the river, should push the boat forward. There is no doubt that the force of the descending water would have a considerable effect, greater in proportion to the height from which it descended; but then it is to be considered, that every bucket-full pumped or dipped up into the boat, from its side or through its bottom, must have

its *vis inertiae* overcome so as to receive the motion of the boat, before it can come to give motion by its descent; and that will be a deduction from the moving power. To remedy this, I would propose the addition of another such L pipe, and that they should stand back to back in the boat thus, figure 13; the forward one being worked as a pump, and sucking in the water at the head of the boat, would draw it forward while pushed in the same direction by the force at the stern. And after all it should be calculated whether the labour of pumping would be less than that of rowing. A fire-engine might possibly in some cases be applied in this operation with advantage.

Perhaps this labour of raising water might be spared, and the whole force of a man applied to the moving of a boat by the use of air instead of water. Suppose the boat constructed in this form, figure 14. *A*, a tube round or square of two feet diameter, in which a piston may move up and down. The piston to have valves in it, opening inwards to admit air when the piston rises; and shutting, when it is forced down by means of the lever *B* turning on the centre *C*. The tube to have a valve *D*, to open when the piston is forced down, and let the air pass out at *E*, which striking forcibly against the water abaft must push the boat forward. If there is added an air-vessel *F* properly valved and placed, the force would continue to act while a fresh stroke is taken with the lever. The boatman might stand with his back to the stern, and putting his hands behind him, work the motion by taking hold of the cross bar at *B*, while another should steer; or, if he had two such pumps, one on each side of the stern, with a lever for each hand, he might steer himself by working occasionally more or harder with either hand, as watermen now do with

a pair of sculls. There is no position in which the body of a man can exert more strength than in pulling right upwards.

To obtain more swiftness, greasing the bottom of a vessel is sometimes used, and with good effect. I do not know that any writer has hitherto attempted to explain this. At first sight, one would imagine, that, though the friction of a hard body, sliding on another hard body, and the resistance occasioned by that friction, might be diminished by putting grease between them, yet that a body sliding on a fluid, such as water, should have no need of, nor receive, any advantage from such greasing. But the fact is not disputed. And the reason perhaps may be this. The particles of water have a mutual attraction, called the attraction of adhesion. Water also adheres to wood, and to many other substances, but not to grease; on the contrary they have a mutual repulsion, so that it is a question whether when oil is poured on water, they ever actually touch each other; for a drop of oil upon water, instead of sticking to the spot where it falls, as it would if it fell on a looking-glass, spreads instantly to an immense distance in a film extremely thin, which it could not easily do if it touched and rubbed or adhered even in a small degree to the surface of the water. Now the adhesive force of water to itself, and to other substances, may be estimated from the weight of it necessary to separate a drop, which adheres, while growing, till it has weight enough to force the separation and break the drop off. Let us suppose the drop to be the size of a pea; then there will be as many of these adhesions as there are drops of that size touching the bottom of a vessel, and these must be broken by the moving power, every step of her motion that amounts to a drop's breadth; and there

being no such adhesions to break between the water and a greased bottom, may occasion the difference.

So much respecting the motion of vessels. But we have sometimes occasion to stop their motion; and, if a bottom is near enough, we can cast anchor. Where there are no soundings, we have as yet no means to prevent driving in a storm, but by lying-to, which still permits driving at the rate of about two miles an hour; so that in a storm continuing fifty hours, which is not an uncommon case, the ship may drive one hundred miles out of her course; and should she in that distance meet with a lee shore, she may be lost.

To prevent this driving to leeward in deep water, a swimming anchor is wanting, which ought to have these properties.

1. It should have a surface so large as, being at the end of a hauser in the water, and placed perpendicularly, should hold so much of it, as to bring the ship's head to the wind, in which situation the wind has least power to drive her.

2. It should be able by its resistance to prevent the ship's receiving way.

3. It should be capable of being situated below the heave of the sea, but not below the undertow.

4. It should not take up much room in the ship.

5. It should be easily thrown out, and put into its proper situation.

6. It should be easy to take in again, and stow away.

An ingenious old mariner, whom I formerly knew, proposed as a swimming anchor for a large ship, to have a stem of wood twenty-five feet long and four inches square, with four boards of 18, 16, 14, and 12, feet long, and one foot wide, the boards to have their substance thickened several inches in the middle

by additional wood, and to have each a four inch square hole through its middle, to permit its being slipped on occasionally upon the stem, and at right angles with it; where, all being placed and fixed at four feet distance from each other, it would have the appearance of the old mathematical instrument called a forestaff. This thrown into the sea, and held by a hauser veered out to some length, he conceived would bring a vessel up, and prevent her driving, and when taken in might be stowed away by separating the boards from the stem; Figure 15. Probably such a swimming anchor would have some good effect; but it is subject to this objection, that, lying on the surface of the sea, it is liable to be hove forward by every wave, and thereby give so much leave for the ship to drive.

Two machines for this purpose have occurred to me, which, though not so simple as the above, I imagine would be more effectual, and more easily manageable. I will endeavour to describe them, that they may be submitted to your judgment, whether either would be serviceable; and, if they would, to which we should give the preference.

The first is to be formed, and to be used in the water on almost the same principles with those of a paper kite used in the air. Only, as the paper kite rises in the air, this is to descend in the water. Its dimensions will be different for ships of different size.

To make one of suppose fifteen feet high; take a small spar of that length for the backbone, *A B*, figure 16, a smaller of half that length *C D*, for the cross piece. Let these be united by a bolt at *E*, yet so as that by turning on the bolt they may be laid parallel to each other. Then make a sail of strong canvas, in the shape of figure 17. To form this, without waste of

sailcloth, sew together pieces of the proper length, and for half the breadth, as in figure 18, then cut the whole in the diagonal lines, *a*, *b*, *c*, and turn the piece *F* so as to place its broad part opposite to that of the piece *G*, and the piece *H* in like manner opposite to *I*, which when all sewed together will appear as in figure 17. This sail is to be extended on the cross of figure 16, the top and bottom points well secured to the ends of the long spar; the two side points, *d*, *e*, fastened to the ends of two cords, which, coming from the angle of the loop (which must be similar to the loop of a kite), pass through two rings at the ends of the short spar, so as that on pulling upon the loop the sail will be drawn to its extent. The whole may, when aboard, be furled up, as in figure 19, having a rope from its broad end, to which is tied a bag of ballast for keeping that end downwards when in the water, and at the other end another rope with an empty keg at its end to float on the surface; this rope long enough to permit the kite's descending into the undertow, or if you please lower into still water. It should be held by a hauser. To get it home easily, a small loose rope may be veered out with it, fixed to the keg. Hauling on that rope will bring the kite home with small force, the resistance being small, as it will then come endways.

It seems probable that such a kite at the end of a long hauser would keep a hip with her head to the wind, and, resisting every tug, would prevent her driving so fast as when her side is exposed to it, and nothing to hold her back. If only half the driving is prevented, so as that she moves but fifty miles instead of the hundred during a storm, it may be some advantage, both in holding so much distance as is saved, and in keeping from a lee-shore. If single canvas should not be found strong enough to bear the tug without splitting,

it may be doubled, or strengthened by a netting behind it, represented by figure 20.

The other machine for the same purpose is to be made more in the form of an umbrella, as represented figure 21. The stem of the umbrella, a square spar of proper length, with four movable arms, of which two are represented *C, C*, figure 22. These arms to be fixed in four joint cleats, as *D, D*, &c., one on each side of the spar, but so as that the four arms may open by turning on a pin in the joint. When open, they form a cross, on which a four-square canvas sail is to be extended, its corners fastened to the ends of the four arms. Those ends are also to be stayed by ropes fastened to the stem or spar, so as to keep them short of being at right angles with it; and to the end of one of the arms should be hung the small bag of ballast, and to the end of the opposite arm the empty keg. This, on being thrown into the sea, would immediately open; and when it had performed its function, and the storm over, a small rope from its other end being pulled on, would turn it, close it, and draw it easily home to the ship. This machine seems more simple in its operation, and more easily manageable than the first, and perhaps may be as effectual.¹

Vessels are sometimes retarded, and sometimes forwarded in their voyages, by currents at sea, which are often not perceived. About the year 1769 or 70, there was an application made by the Board of Customs at Boston, to the Lords of the Treasury in London, complaining that the packets between Falmouth and New York were generally a fortnight

¹ Captain Truxtun, on board whose ship this was written, has executed this proposed machine; he has given six arms to the umbrella, they are joined to the stem by iron hinges, and the canvas is double. He has taken it with him to China. February, 1786. — F.

longer in their passages, than merchant ships from London to Rhode Island, and proposing that for the future they should be ordered to Rhode Island instead of New York. Being then concerned in the management of the American post-office, I happened to be consulted on the occasion; and it appearing strange to me, that there should be such a difference between two places scarce a day's run asunder, especially when the merchant ships are generally deeper laden, and more weakly manned than the packets, and had from London the whole length of the river and channel to run before they left the land of England, while the packets had only to go from Falmouth, I could not but think the fact misunderstood or misrepresented. There happened then to be in London a Nantucket sea captain of my acquaintance, to whom I communicated the affair. He told me he believed the fact might be true; but the difference was owing to this, that the Rhode Island captains were acquainted with the Gulf Stream, which those of the English packets were not. "We are well acquainted with that stream," says he, "because in our pursuit of whales, which keep near the sides of it, but are not to be met with in it, we run down along the sides, and frequently cross it to change our side; and in crossing it have sometimes met and spoke with those packets, who were in the middle of it, and stemming it. We have informed them that they were stemming a current, that was against them to the value of three miles an hour; and advised them to cross it and get out of it; but they were too wise to be counselled by simple American fishermen. When the winds are but light," he added, "they are carried back by the current more than they are forwarded by the wind; and, if the wind be good, the subtraction of seventy miles a day from their course is of

some importance." I then observed it was a pity no notice was taken of this current upon the charts, and requested him to mark it out for me, which he readily complied with, adding directions for avoiding it in sailing from Europe to North America. I procured it to be engraved by order from the general post-office, on the old chart of the Atlantic, at Mount and Page's, Tower Hill; and copies were sent down to Falmouth for the captains of the packets, who slighted it however; but it is since printed in France, of which edition I hereto annex a copy. [See Plate XIII.]

This stream is probably generated by the great accumulation of water on the eastern coast of America between the tropics, by the trade winds which constantly blow there. It is known, that a large piece of water ten miles broad and generally only three feet deep, has by a strong wind had its waters driven to one side and sustained so as to become six feet deep, while the windward side was laid dry. This may give some idea of the quantity heaped up on the American coast, and the reason of its running down in a strong current through the islands into the bay of Mexico, and from thence issuing through the Gulph of Florida, and proceeding along the coast to the banks of Newfoundland, where it turns off towards and runs down through the Western Islands. Having since crossed this stream several times in passing between America and Europe, I have been attentive to sundry circumstances relating to it, by which to know when one is in it; and besides the gulf weed with which it is interspersed, I find, that it is always warmer than the sea on each side of it, and that it does not sparkle in the night. I annex hereto the observations made with the thermometer in two voyages, and possibly may add a third. It will appear from them,

that the thermometer may be a useful instrument to a navigator, since currents coming from the northward into southern seas will probably be found colder than the water of those seas, as the currents from southern seas into northern are found warmer. And it is not to be wondered, that so vast a body of deep warm water, several leagues wide, coming from between the tropics and issuing out of the gulph into the northern seas, should retain its warmth longer than the twenty or thirty days required to its passing the banks of Newfoundland. The quantity is too great, and it is too deep to be suddenly cooled by passing under a cooler air. The air immediately over it, however, may receive so much warmth from it as to be rarefied and rise, being rendered lighter than the air on each side of the stream; hence those airs must flow in to supply the place of the rising warm air, and, meeting with each other, form those tornados and waterspouts frequently met with, and seen near and over the stream; and as the vapour from a cup of tea in a warm room, and the breath of an animal in the same room, are hardly visible, but become sensible immediately when out in the cold air, so the vapour from the gulph stream, in warm latitudes, is scarcely visible, but when it comes into the cool air from Newfoundland, it is condensed into the fogs, for which those parts are so remarkable.

The power of wind to raise water above its common level in the sea is known to us in America, by the high tides occasioned in all our seaports when a strong northeaster blows against the Gulf Stream.

The conclusion from these remarks is, that a vessel from Europe to North America may shorten her passage by avoiding to stem the stream, in which the thermometer will be very

useful; and a vessel from America to Europe may do the same by the same means of keeping in it. It may have often happened accidentally, that voyages have been shortened by these circumstances. It is well to have the command of them.¹

Would it not be a more secure method of planking ships, if, instead of thick single planks laid horizontally, we were to use planks of half the thickness, and lay them double and across each other, as in figure 23? To me it seems that the difference of expense would not be considerable, and that the ship would be both tighter and stronger.

The securing of the ship is not the only necessary thing; securing the health of the sailors, a brave and valuable order of men, is likewise of great importance. With this view the methods so successfully practised by Captain Cook, in his long voyages, cannot be too closely studied or carefully imitated. A full account of those methods is found in Sir John Pringle's speech, when the medal of the Royal Society was given to that illustrious navigator. I am glad to see in his last voyage, that he found the means effectual, which I had proposed for preserving flour, bread, &c., from moisture and damage. They were found dry and good after being at sea four years. The method is described in my printed works, page 452, fifth edition. In the same, page 469, 470, is proposed a means of allaying thirst in case of want of fresh water. This has since been practised in two instances with success. Happy if their hunger, when the other provisions are consumed, could be relieved as commodiously; and perhaps in time this may be found not impossible. An addition might be made to their present vegetable provision, by drying

¹ Here a paragraph is omitted. It relates to the retarding of westward-bound vessels, by the diurnal motion of the earth. See Vol. I, p. 83. — ED.

various roots in slices by the means of an oven. The sweet potatoe of America and Spain is excellent for this purpose. Other potatoes, with carrots, parsnips, and turnips, might be prepared and preserved in the same manner.

With regard to make-shifts in cases of necessity, seamen are generally very ingenious themselves. They will excuse, however, the mention of two or three. If they happen in any circumstance, such as after shipwreck, taking to their boat, or the like, to want a compass, a fine sewing needle laid on clear water in a cup will generally point to the north, most of them being a little magnetical, or may be made so by being strongly rubbed or hammered, lying in a north and south direction. If their needle is too heavy to float by itself, it may be supported by little pieces of cork or wood. A man who can swim, may be aided in a long traverse by his handkerchief formed into a kite, by two cross sticks extending to the four corners; which, being raised in the air when the wind is fair and fresh, will tow him along while lying on his back. Where force is wanted to move a heavy body, and there are but few hands and no machines, a long and strong rope may make a powerful instrument. Suppose a boat is to be drawn up on a beach, that she may be out of the surf; a stake drove into the beach where you would have the boat drawn, and another to fasten the end of the rope to, which comes from the boat, and then applying what force you have to pull upon the middle of the rope at right angles with it, the power will be augmented in proportion to the length of rope between the posts. The rope being fastened to the stake, *A*, and drawn upon in the direction, *C D*, will slide over the stake *B*; and when the rope is bent to the angle, *A D B*, represented by the pricked line in figure 24, the boat will be at *B*.

Some sailors may think the writer has given himself unnecessary trouble in pretending to advise them; for they have a little repugnance to the advice of landmen, whom they esteem ignorant and incapable of giving any worth notice; though it is certain that most of their instruments were the invention of landmen. At least the first vessel ever made to go on the water was certainly such. I will therefore add only a few words more, and they shall be addressed to passengers.

When you intend a long voyage, you may do well to keep your intention as much as possible a secret, or at least the time of your departure; otherwise you will be continually interrupted in your preparations by the visits of friends and acquaintance, who will not only rob you of the time you want, but put things out of your mind, so that when you come to sea, you have the mortification to recollect points of business that ought to have been done, accounts you intended to settle, and conveniences you had proposed to bring with you, &c. &c., all which have been omitted through the effect of these officious friendly visits. Would it not be well if this custom could be changed; if the voyager, after having, without interruption, made all his preparations, should use some of the time he has left, in going himself to take leave of his friends at their own houses, and let them come to congratulate him on his happy return?

It is not always in your power to make a choice in your captain, though much of your comfort in the passage may depend on his personal character, as you must for so long a time be confined to his company, and under his direction; if he be a sensible, sociable, good-natured, obliging man, you will be so much the happier. Such there are; but, if he happens to be otherwise, and is only skilful, careful, watch-

ful, and active in the conduct of his ship, excuse the rest, for these are the essentials.

Whatever right you may have by agreement in the mass of stores laid in by him for the passengers, it is good to have some particular things in your own possession, so as to be always at your own command.

1. Good water, that of the ship being often bad. You can be sure of having it good only by bottling it from a clear spring or well, and in clean bottles. 2. Good tea. 3. Coffee ground. 4. Chocolate. 5. Wine of the sort you particularly like, and cider. 6. Raisins. 7. Almonds. 8. Sugar. 9. Capillaire. 10. Lemons. 11. Jamaica spirits. 12. Eggs, greas'd. 13. Diet bread. 14. Portable soup. 15. Rusks. As to fowls, it is not worth while to have any called yours, unless you could have the feeding and managing of them according to your own judgment, under your own eye. As they are generally treated at present in ships, they are for the most part sick, and their flesh tough and hard as whit-leather. All seamen have an opinion, broached I suppose at first prudently, for saving of water when short, that fowls do not know when they have drunk enough, and will kill themselves if you give them too much, so they are served with a little only once in two days. This is poured into troughs that lie sloping, and therefore immediately runs down to the lower end. There the fowls ride upon one another's backs to get at it, and some are not happy enough to reach and once dip their bills in it. Thus tantalized, and tormented with thirst, they cannot digest their dry food, they fret, pine, sicken, and die. Some are found dead, and thrown overboard every morning, and those killed for the table are not eatable. Their troughs should be in little divi-

sions, like cups, to hold the water separately, figure 25. But this is never done. The sheep and hogs are therefore your best dependence for fresh meat at sea, the mutton being generally tolerable and the pork excellent.

It is possible your captain may have provided so well in the general stores, as to render some of the particulars above recommended of little or no use to you. But there are frequently in the ship poorer passengers, who are taken at a lower price, lodge in the steerage, and have no claim to any of the cabin provisions, or to any but those kinds that are allowed the sailors. These people are sometimes dejected, sometimes sick; there may be women and children among them. In a situation where there is no going to market to purchase such necessities, a few of these your superfluities, distributed occasionally, may be of great service, restore health, save life, make the miserable happy, and thereby afford you infinite pleasure.

The worst thing in ordinary merchant ships is the cookery. They have no professed cook, and the worst hand as a seaman is appointed to that office, in which he is not only very ignorant but very dirty. The sailors have therefore a saying, that *God sends meat, and the Devil cooks*. Passengers more piously disposed, and willing to believe Heaven orders all things for the best, may suppose, that, knowing the sea air and constant exercise by the motion of the vessel would give us extraordinary appetites, bad cooks were kindly sent to prevent our eating too much; or that, foreseeing we should have bad cooks, good appetites were furnished to prevent our starving. If you cannot trust to these circumstances, a spirit-lamp, with a blaze-pan, may enable you to cook some little things for yourself; such as a hash, a soup, &c. And it

might be well also to have among your stores some potted meats, which, if well put up, will keep long good. A small tin oven, to place with the open side before the fire, may be another good utensil, in which your own servant may roast for you a bit of pork or mutton. You will sometimes be induced to eat of the ship's salt beef, as it is often good. You will find cyder the best quencher of that thirst, which salt meat or fish occasions. The ship biscuit is too hard for some sets of teeth. It may be softened by toasting. But rusk is better; for being made of good fermented bread, sliced and baked a second time, the pieces imbibe the water easily, soften immediately, digest more kindly, and are therefore more wholesome than the unfermented biscuit. By the way, rusk is the true original biscuit, so prepared to keep for sea, biscuit in French signifying *twice baked*. If your dry peas boil hard, a two pound iron shot put with them into the pot will, by the motion of the ship, grind them as fine as mustard.

The accidents I have seen at sea with large dishes of soup upon a table, from the motion of the ship, have made me wish that our potters or pewterers would make soup dishes in divisions, like a set of small bowls united together, each containing about sufficient for one person, in some such form as figure 26; for then, when the ship should make a sudden heel, the soup would not in a body flow over one side, and fall into people's laps and scald them, as is sometimes the case, but would be retained in the separate divisions, as in figure 27.

After these trifles, permit the addition of a few general reflections. Navigation, when employed in supplying necessary provisions to a country in want, and thereby preventing famines, which were more frequent and destructive before the

invention of that art, is undoubtedly a blessing to mankind. When employed merely in transporting superfluities, it is a question whether the advantage of the employment it affords is equal to the mischief of hazarding so many lives on the ocean. But when employed in pillaging merchants and transporting slaves, it is clearly the means of augmenting the mass of human misery. It is amazing to think of the ships and lives risked in fetching tea from China, coffee from Arabia, sugar and tobacco from America, all which our ancestors did well without. Sugar employs near one thousand ships, tobacco almost as many. For the utility of tobacco there is little to be said; and for that of sugar, how much more commendable would it be, if we could give up the few minutes' gratification afforded once or twice a day by the taste of sugar in our tea, rather than encourage the cruelties exercised in producing it. An eminent French moralist says, that when he considers the wars we excite in Africa to obtain slaves, the numbers necessarily slain in those wars, the many prisoners who perish at sea by sickness, bad provisions, foul air, &c. &c., in the transportation, and how many afterwards die from the hardships of slavery, he cannot look on a piece of sugar without conceiving it stained with spots of human blood! Had he added the consideration of the wars we make to take and retake the sugar islands from one another, and the fleets and armies that perish in those expeditions, he might have seen his sugar not merely spotted, but thoroughly dyed scarlet in grain. It is these wars, that make the maritime powers of Europe, the inhabitants of London and Paris, pay dearer for sugar than those of Vienna, a thousand miles from the sea; because their sugar costs not only the price they pay for it by the pound,

but all they pay in taxes to maintain the fleets and armies that fight for it.

With great esteem, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

APPENDIX TO THE ABOVE LETTER

Remarks upon the Navigation from Newfoundland to New York, in Order to avoid the Gulj Stream on one Hand, and, on the other, the Shoals that lie to the southward of Nantucket and of St. George's Banks.

READ AT A MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, DECEMBER
2^d, 1785.

AFTER you have passed the banks of Newfoundland in about the forty-fourth degree of latitude, you will meet with nothing, till you draw near the Isle of Sables, which we commonly pass in latitude 43° . Southward of this Isle, the current is found to extend itself as far north as $41^{\circ} 20'$ or $30'$, then it turns towards the E. S. E. or S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ E.

Having passed the Isle of Sables, shape your course for the St. George's Banks, so as to pass them in about latitude 40° , because the current southward of those banks reaches as far north as 39° . The shoals of those banks lie in $41^{\circ} 35'$.

After having passed St. George's Banks, you must, to clear Nantucket, form your course so as to pass between the latitudes $38^{\circ} 30'$ and $40^{\circ} 45'$.

The most southern part of the shoals of Nantucket lie in about $40^{\circ} 45'$. The northern part of the current directly to the south of Nantucket is felt in about latitude $38^{\circ} 30'$.

By observing these directions, and keeping between the stream and the shoals, the passage from the Banks of Newfoundland to New York, Delaware, or Virginia, may be considerably shortened; for so you will have the advantage of the eddy current, which moves contrary to the Gulf Stream. Whereas, if to avoid the shoals you keep too far to the southward, and get into that stream, you will be retarded by it at the rate of sixty or seventy miles a day.

The Nantucket whalemens being extremely well acquainted with the Gulf Stream, its course, strength, and extent, by their constant practice of whaling on the edges of it, from their island quite down to the Bahamas, this draft of that stream [Plate XIII.] was obtained from one of them, Captain Folger, and caused to be engraved on the old chart in London, for the benefit of navigators, by

B. FRANKLIN.

NOTE. The Nantucket captains, who are acquainted with this stream, make their voyages from England to Boston in as short a time generally as others take in going from Boston to England, viz. from twenty to thirty days.

A stranger may know when he is in the Gulf Stream, by the warmth of the water, which is much greater than that of the water on each side of it. If then he is bound to the westward, he should cross the stream to get out of it as soon as possible.

B. FRANKLIN.

Observations of the Warmth of the Sea Water, &c., by Fahrenheit's Thermometer, in crossing the Gulph Stream; with other Remarks made on board the Pennsylvania Packet, Capt. Osborne, bound from London to Philadelphia, in April and May, 1775.

DATE.	HOUR.	TEMP. OF AIR.	TEMP. OF WATER.	WIND.	COURSE.	DISTANCE.	LATITUDE N.	LONGITUDE W.	REMARKS.
April 10			62						
11			61						
12			64						
13			65						
14			65						
26		60	70				37° 39'	60° 38'	Much gulph weed; saw a whale.
27	8 A.M.	60	70	S. S. E.	W. b. S.		37 13	62 29	Colour of water changed.
28	6 P.M.	70	64	S. W.	W. N. W.		37 48	64 35	No gulph weed.
—		67	60			34			Sounded, no bottom.
29	8 A.M.	63	71	N.	W.	44	37 26	66 0	Much light in the water last night.
—	5 P.M.	65	72	N. E.	W. b. S. }	57			Water again of the usual deep sea-
—	11 "	66	66	N. W. b. N.	W. b. N.	69			color, little or no light in it at
30	8 A.M.	64	70	N. E.	E. b. S.	24	37 20	68 53	night.
—	12	62	70		W. b. N.	43			Frequent gulph weed, water continues
—	6 P.M.	64	72	E. S. E.	W. b. N.	25			of sea-color, little light.
—	10 "	65	65	S.		60			Much light.
May 1	7 A.M.	68	63	S. S. W.	W. N. W.	44	38 13	72 23	Much light all last night.
—	12	65	56		W. b. N.	21			Colour of water changed.
—	4 P.M.	64	56	S. W.	W. N. W.	31			Much light.
—	10 "	64	57			18			
2	8 A.M.	62	53	W. S. W.	N. W.	18	38 43	74 3	Much light. Thunder-gust.
—	12	60	53	N. W.	W. S. W.	15			
—	6 P.M.	64	55	N. W.	W. b. N.	10			
—	10 "	65	55	N. b. W.		30	38 30	75 0	
3	7 A.M.	62	54						

Observations of the Warmth of the Sea Water, &c., by Fahrenheit's Thermometer; with other Remarks made on board the Reprisal, Captain Wickes, bound from Philadelphia to France, in October and November, 1776.

DATE.	HOUR A.M.	HOUR P.M.	TEMP. OF AIR.	TEMP. OF WATER.	WIND.	COURSE.	DIS- TANCE.	LATITUDE N.	LONGITUDE W.	REMARKS.
Oct. 31	10		76	70	S. S. E.	E. b. S.	135	38° 12'	70° 30'	Left the capes Thursday night, October 29, 1776.
Nov. 1	10	4		71	W. S. W.	E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	109	No obs.	68 12	
2	8	4	71	81	N.					
3	8	4	67	75	N. W.	E. S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	141	Do.	65 23	Some sparks in the water these two last nights.
4	9	4	70	76		E. b. S.	160	37 0	62 7	
5		1	68	76		N. b. E.	194	36 26	58 8	
6	8	8	68	76		N. E.	163	35 21	55 3	Do.
7	12	4	70	75						
8	12	8		75	E. b. N.	S. 50 E.	75	35 33	53 52	
9	12			77	S. E. b. E.	N. 30 W.	108	36 6	52 46	
10	12	4		77						
11	9		75	77	S. b. E.	N. 49 E.	175	38 2	50 1	
12	12	4		77						
13	9		75	77						
14	12		75	70	S. W.	N. 33 E.	175	39 39	46 55	

Observations made on board the Reprisal, continued.

DATE.	HOUR A.M.	HOUR P.M.	TEMP. OF AIR.	TEMP. OF WATER.	WIND.	COURSE.	DIS- TANCE.	LATITUDE N.	LONGITUDE W.	REMARKS.
Nov. 9	8	4	70	71	E.	N. 17 E.	64	40° 39'	46° 27'	
10	12			68						
11	8			63	S. E.	N. 8 E.	41	41 19	46 19	
12	8		56	59	N. N. W.	N. 80 E.	120	41 39	43 42	
13	all	4		68	E.	S. 82 E.	69	41 29	42 10	
14	8	noon	70	70	E. S. E.	N. 74 E.	111	42 0	39 57	
15	8	4.	61	71						
16		noon		68	W. S. W.	N. 70 E.	186	43 3	35 51	
17		4	65	67	S. W.	N. 67 W.	48	43 22	34 50	
18	8			63	E. S. E.	N. 19 E.	56	44 15	34 25	
19	all	day		65	S. b W.	N. 75 E.	210	45 6	29 43	
20	8	noon	65	64	S. W.	N. 80 E.	238	45 46	24 2	
21	9	4		60	N.	S. 80 E.	155	45 19	20 30	Some gulf weed.
22	10		60	62	S. S. W.	N. 88 E.	94	45 22	18 17	
23		noon		61	W. S. W.	S. 89 E.	133	45 19	15 19	
24		do.		60	N. N. E.	S. 86 E.	194	45 6	10 35	
25		do.		60	N. E.	N. 78 E.	191	45 46	6 10	
26		do.	56	60	E.	S. 76 E.	125	45 4	3 23	
27		do.		58		N. 73 E.	31	45 13	2 20	
28		do.	54	56						Soundings off Bellisle.

*A Journal of a Voyage from the Channel between France and England
towards America in 1785.*

DATES.	LATITUDE N.	LONGITUDE W.	THERM. A.M.		WINDS.	COURSE.	Dis- TANCE.	VARIATION OF THE NEEDLE.	THERM. NOON.	
			AIR.	WATER.					AIR.	WATER.
July 29			62	57	{ These are average of 24 hours.	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. W. b. S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. S. W. b. W.	Miles 60	West. 22° 0'		
30			62	58						
31			60	58						
Aug. 1	49° 15'	4° 15'	63	62	E.	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	64			
2	48 28	8 58	64	64	E. S. E.	W. b. S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	63			
3	47 0	12 13	60	67	N. E.	S. W. b. W.	omit- ted			
4	45 0	15 43	66	66	N. W. b. W.	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	66			
5	43 5	17 25	67	65	N. E.	S. W. b. S.	68			
6	41 3	19 44	70	68	N. E.	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	69			
7	38 45	21 34	70	70	N. E.	S. S. W. $\frac{3}{4}$ W.	70			
8	36 42	23 10	72	71	N. E.	S. S. W. $\frac{3}{4}$ W.	72			
9	35 40	25 40	73	73	N. E.	W. S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	74			
10	35 0	27 0	71	73	N. W.	W. S. W. $\frac{3}{4}$ S.	75			
11	33 51	28 42	74	74	N.	S. W. $\frac{3}{4}$ W.	77			
12	33 30	31 30	76	75	N.	W. $\frac{3}{4}$ S.	76			
13	33 17	33 32	76	76	N. E.	W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	77			
14	33 22	34 31	76	76	S. S. E.	W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	78		77	78
15	33 45	35 0	78	79	W. N. W.	S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	79		81	79
16	34 14	35 30	79	78	W.	N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	80		79	79
17	35 37	36 4	80	79	W. S. W.	N. N. W.	78		81	80
18	36 7	37 16	80	78	N. W. b W.	W. N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	omit- ted		80	78
19	36 38	38 0	78	77	W. S. W.	N. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	78		80	79
							77		79	77

DATES.	LATITUDE N.	LONGITUDE W.	THERM. A. M.		WINDS.	COURSE.	DISTANCE.	VARIATION OF THE NEEDLE.	THERM. NOON.	
			AIR.	WATER.					AIR.	WATER.
Aug. 20	37°	38'	78	76	W.	N. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	62		77	75
21	36 15	38 26	73	74	W. N. W.	S. b. W.	82		77	75
22	35 40	38 44	77	76	W. b. S.	S. S. W.	38		80	77
23	35 35	40 52	79	77	N.	W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	100		omitted	
24	35 12	41 31	75	73	W. N. W.	S. W. b. W.	41		75	74
25	35 40	42 33	79	76	W. b. N.	W. N. W. $\frac{3}{4}$ N.	60		80	76
26	35 30	42 44	79	76	S. W. b. W.	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	14		80	76
27	35 14	43 23	79	77	W.	W. S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	38		81	78
28	34 23	44 44	78	76	N. N. E.	S. W. b. S.	60		78	78
29	34 12	45 52	77	78	N. E.	W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	04	8° 0'	79	78
30	34 5	48 31	78	78	E.	W. S. S.	134		78	78
31	34 20	51 4	80	79	E.	W. S. S.	129		80	80
Sept. 1	34 20	52 47	81	78	S. S. W.	W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	86		83	80
2	34 55	55 12	81	80	S. W.	W. b. N. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	125		83	80
3	35 30	57 24	83	80	S. W. b. S.	W. b. N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	114	6 0	84	81
4	35 50	59 1	82	80	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	W. b. N. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	82		83	81
5	35 55	61 0	81	80	S. S. W.	W. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	96		82	81
6	36 20	62 30	80	81	N. W. b. N.	W. b. N.	75		78	80
7	34 50	63 10	87	80	N. W. b. N.	S. S. W.	86		78	81
8	34 45	64 40	75	79	N.	W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	74		75	79
9	35 43	66 42	75	79	N. E.	W. N. W.	108		78	80
10	37 20	68 40	77	73	E. N. E.	N. W.	126		78	72

Observations

July 31. At one P.M. the Start bore W. N. W. distant six leagues.

August 1. The water appears luminous in the ship's wake.

— 2. The temperature of the water is taken at eight in the morning and at eight in the evening.

— 6. The water appears less luminous.

— 7. Formegas S. W. distant $32\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. St. Mary's S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 33 leagues.

— 8. From this date the temperature of the water is taken at eight in the morning and at six in the evening.

— 10. Moonlight, which prevents the luminous appearance of the water.

— 11. A strong southerly current.

— 12. Ditto. From this date the temperature of the air and water was taken at noon, as well as morning and evening.

— 16. Northerly current.

— 19. First saw gulf weed.

— 21. Southerly current.

— 22. Again saw gulf weed.

— 24. The water appeared luminous in a small degree before the moon rose.

— 29. No moon, yet very little light in the water.

— 30. Much gulf weed to-day.

— 31. Ditto.

September 1. Ditto.

— 2. A little more light in the water.

— 4. No gulf weed to-day. More light in the water.

— 5. Some gulf weed again.

— 6. Little light in the water. A very hard thunder-gust in the night.

— 7. Little gulf weed.

— 8. More light in the water. Little gulf weed.

— 9. Little gulf weed. Little light in the water last evening.

— 10. Saw some beds of rock-weed; and we were surprised to observe the water six degrees colder by the thermometer than the preceding noon.

This day (10th) the thermometer still kept descending, and at five in the morning of the 11th, it was in water as low as 70, when we struck soundings. The same evening the pilot came on board, and we found our ship about five degrees of longitude a-head of the reckoning, which our captain accounted for by supposing our course to have been near the edge of the Gulf Stream, and thus an eddy-current always in our favour. By the distance we ran from September 9th, in the evening, till we struck soundings, we must have then been at the western edge of the Gulf Stream, and the change in the temperature of the water was probably owing to our suddenly passing from that current into the waters of our own climate.

On the 14th of August the following experiment was made. The weather being perfectly calm, an empty bottle, corked very tight, was sent down 20 fathoms, and it was drawn up still empty. It was then sent down again 35 fathoms, when the weight of the water having forced in the cork, it was drawn up full; the water it contained was immediately tried by the thermometer, and found to be 70, which was six degrees colder than at the surface; the lead and bottle were visible, but not very distinctly so, at the depth of 12 fathoms; but, when only 7 fathoms deep, they were perfectly seen from the ship. This experiment was thus repeated September 11th, when we were in soundings of 18 fathoms. A keg was previously prepared with a valve at each end, one opening inward, the other outward; this was sent to the bottom in expectation that by the valves being both open when going down, and both shut when coming up, it would keep within it the water received at bottom. The upper valve performed its office well, but the under one did not shut quite close, so that much of the water was lost in hauling it up the ship's side. As the water in the keg's passage upwards could not enter at the top, it was concluded that what water remained in it was of that near the ground; and, on trying this by the thermometer, it was found to be 58, which was 12 degrees colder than at the surface.

[This last Journal was obligingly kept for me by Mr. J. Williams, my fellow-passenger in the London Packet, who made all the experiments with great exactness.]

1598. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ¹ (L. L.)

ON THE CAUSES AND CURE OF SMOKY CHIMNEYS

At Sea, August 28, 1785

DEAR FRIEND,

In one of your Letters, a little before I left France, you desire me to give you in Writing my Thoughts upon the Construction and Use of Chimneys, a Subject you had sometimes heard me touch upon in Conversation. I embrace willingly

¹ This letter, which has been published in a separate pamphlet, both in England and America, first appeared in the Transactions of The American Philosophical Society, Vol. II, p. 1 (1786), in which it was read October 21st, 1785.—ED.

this Leisure afforded by my present Situation to comply with your Request, as it will not only show my Regard to the Desires of a Friend, but may at the same time be of some Utility to others; the Doctrine of Chimneys appearing not to be as yet generally well understood, and Mistakes respecting them being attended with constant Inconvenience, if not remedied, and with fruitless Expence, if the true Remedies are mistaken.

Those who would be acquainted with this Subject, should begin by considering on what Principle Smoke ascends in any Chimney. At first, many are apt to think, that Smoke is in its Nature and of itself specifically lighter than Air, and rises in it for the same reason that Cork rises in Water. These see no Cause why Smoke should not rise in the Chimney, tho' the Room be ever so close. Others think there is a Power in Chimneys to *draw* up the Smoke, and that there are different forms of Chimneys, which afford more or less of this Power. These amuse themselves with searching for the best Form. The equal Dimensions of a Funnel in its whole Length is not thought Artificial enough, and it is made, for fancied Reasons, sometimes tapering and narrowing from below upwards, and sometimes the contrary, &c. &c. A simple Experiment or two may serve to give more correct Ideas. Having lit a Pipe of Tobacco, plunge the Stem to the Bottom of a Decanter half fill'd with cold Water; then putting a Rag over the Bowl, blow thro' it and make the Smoke descend in the Stem of the Pipe, from the End of which it will rise in Bubbles thro' the Water; and, being thus cool'd, will not afterwards rise to go out thro' the Neck of the Decanter, but remain spreading itself and resting on the Surface of the Water. This shows that Smoke is really heavier than Air, and that

it is carried upwards only when attach'd to, or acted upon, by Air that is heated, and thereby rarefied and rendered specifically lighter than the Air in its Neighbourhood.

Smoke being rarely seen but in company with heated Air, and its upward Motion being visible, tho' that of the rarefied air that drives it is not so, has naturally given rise to the Error.

I need not explain to you, my learned Friend, what is meant by rarefied Air; but if you make the public use you propose of this Letter, it may fall into the Hands of some who are unacquainted with the Term and with the Thing. These then may be told, that air is a Fluid which has Weight as well as others, tho' about 800 times lighter than Water. That Heat makes the Particles of Air recede from each other and take up more Space, so that the same Weight of Air heated will have more Bulk, than equal Weights of cold Air which may surround it, and in that Case must rise, being forc'd upwards by such colder and heavier Air, which presses to get under it and take its Place. That Air is so rarified or expanded by Heat may be proved to their Comprehension by a lank blown Bladder, which, laid before a Fire, will soon swell, grow tight, and burst.

Another Experiment may be, to take a glass Tube about an Inch in diameter, and 12 Inches long, open at both Ends and fixed upright on Legs, so that it need not be handled, for the Hands might warm it. At the End of a Quill fasten 5 or 6 Inches of the finest light filament of Silk, so that it may be held either above the upper End of the Tube or under the lower End, your warm Hand being at a distance by the Length of the Quill. (Plate XIV. Fig. 1.) If there were any motion of Air thro' the Tube, it would manifest itself by its Effect on

the Silk; but, if the Tube and the Air in it are of the same Temperature with the surrounding Air, there will be no such Motion, whatever may be the Form of the Tube, whether crooked or strait, narrow below and widening upwards, or the contrary, the Air in it will be quiescent. Warm the Tube, and you will find, as long as it continues warm, a constant Current of Air, entring below and passing up thro' it, till discharg'd at the Top; because the Warmth of the Tube, being communicated to the Air it contains, rarefies that Air and makes it lighter than the Air without, which therefore presses in below, forces it upwards, and follows and takes its place, and is rarefied in its turn. And without warming the Tube, if you hold under it a Knob of hot Iron, the Air thereby heated will rise and fill the Tube, going out at its Top; and this Motion in the Tube will continue as long as the Knob remains hot, because the Air entring the Tube below is heated and rarefied by passing near and over that Knob.

That this Motion is produc'd merely by the Difference of Specific Gravity between the Fluid within and that without the Tube, and not by any fancied Form of the Tube itself, may appear by plunging it into Water contain'd in a Glass Jar a foot deep, thro' which such Motion might be seen. The Water within and without the Tube being of the same Specific Gravity, balance each other, and both remain at rest. But take out the Tube, stop its Bottom with a Finger and fill it with Olive Oil, which is lighter than Water, then stopping the Top, place it as before, its lower End under Water, its Top a very little above. As long as you keep the Bottom stopt, the Fluids remain at rest, but the Moment it is unstopt, the heavier enters below, forces up the lighter, and takes its Place. And the Motion then ceases, merely because the

new Fluid cannot be successively made lighter, as Air may be by a warm Tube.

In fact, no Form of the Funnel of a Chimney has any Share in its Operation or Effect respecting Smoke, except its Height. The longer the Funnel, if erect, the greater its Force when fill'd with heated and rarefied Air, to *draw* in below and drive up the Smoke, if one may, in compliance with Custom, use the Expression *draw*, when in fact it is the superior Weight of the surrounding Atmosphere that *presses* to enter the Funnel below, and so *drives up* before it the Smoke and warm Air it meets with in its Passage.

I have been the more particular in explaining these first Principles, because, for want of clear Ideas respecting them, much fruitless expence has been occasion'd; not only single Chimneys, but, in some Instances within my Knowledge, whole Stacks having been pulled down and rebuilt with Funnels of different Forms, imagin'd more powerful in *drawing* Smoke; but, having still the same Height and the same Opening below, have perform'd no better than their Predecessors.

What is it then which makes a *Smoky Chimney*; that is, a Chimney which, instead of conveying up all the Smoke, discharges a Part of it into the Room, offending the Eyes and damaging the Furniture?

The Causes of this Effect, which have fallen under my Observation, amount to *Nine*, differing from each other, and therefore requiring different Remedies.

I. *Smoky Chimneys in a new House are such, frequently, from mere Want of Air.* The Workmanship of the Rooms being all good, and just out of the Workman's Hand, the Joints of the Boards of the Flooring, and of the Pannels of

Wainscoting are all true and tight, the more so as the Walls, perhaps not yet thoroughly dry, preserve a Dampness in the Air of the Room, which keeps the Wood work swelled and close. The Doors and the Sashes too, being work'd with Truth, shut with Exactness, so that the Room is as tight as a SnuffBox, no Passage being left open for Air to enter, except the Keyhole, and even that is sometimes covered by a little dropping Shutter. Now if Smoke cannot rise but as connected with rarefied Air, and a Column of such Air, suppose it filling the Funnel, cannot rise, unless other Air be admitted to supply its place; and if, therefore, no Current of Air enter the Opening of the Chimney, there is nothing to prevent the Smoke coming out into the Room. If the Motion upwards of the Air in a Chimney, that is freely supply'd, be observed by the rising of the Smoke or a Feather in it, and it be considered, that, in the Time such Feather takes in rising from the Fire to the Top of the Chimney, a Column of Air equal to the Content of the Funnel must be discharged, and an equal Quantity supply'd from the Room below, it will appear absolutely impossible that this Operation should go on if the tight Room is kept shut; for, were there any Force capable of drawing constantly so much Air out of it, it must soon be exhausted like the Receiver of an Air pump, and no Animal could live in it. Those therefore who stop every Crevice in a Room to prevent the admission of fresh Air, and yet would have their Chimney carry up the Smoke, require Inconsistencies, and expect Impossibilities. Yet, under this Situation, I have seen the Owner of a new House, in Despair, and ready to sell it for much less than it cost, conceiving it uninhabitable, because not a Chimney in any one of its Rooms would carry off the Smoke, unless a

Door or Window were left open. Much Expence has also been made, to alter and amend new Chimneys which had really no Fault; in one House particularly that I knew, of a Nobleman in Westminster, that Expence amounted to no less than £300, *after* his House had been, as he thought, finish'd and all Charges paid. And after all, several of the Alterations were ineffectual, for want of understanding the true Principles.

Remedies. When you find on Trial, that opening the Door or a Window enables the Chimney to carry up all the Smoke, you may be sure that want of Air *from without* was the Cause of its Smoking. I say *from without*, to guard you against a common Mistake of those, who may tell you the Room is large, contains abundance of Air, sufficient to supply any Chimney, and therefore it cannot be that the Chimney wants Air. These Reasoners are ignorant, that the largeness of a Room, if tight, is in this case of small Importance, since it cannot part with a Chimney full of its Air without occasioning so much Vacuum; which it requires a great Force to effect, and could not be borne, if effected.

It appearing plainly, then, that some of the outward Air must be admitted, the Question will be, how much is *absolutely necessary*; for you would avoid admitting more, as being contrary to one of your Intentions in having a Fire, viz. that of warming your Room. To discover this Quantity, shut the Door gradually while a middling Fire is burning, till you find, that, before it is quite shut, the Smoke begins to come out into the Room, then open it a little till you perceive the Smoke comes out no longer. There hold the Door, and observe the Width of the open crevice between the Edge of the Door and the Rabbit it should shut into. Suppose the

Distance to be half an Inch, and the Door 8 feet high, you find thence that your Room requires an Entrance for Air equal in area to 96 half inches, or 48 square Inches, or a Passage of 6 inches by 8. This however is a large Supposition, there being few Chimneys, that, having a moderate Opening and a tolerable Height of Funnel, will not be satisfied with such a Crevice of $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch; and I have found a Square of 6 by 6, or 36 square Inches, to be a pretty good Medium, that will serve for most Chimneys. High Funnels, with small and low Openings, may indeed be supply'd thro' a less Space, because, for Reasons that will appear hereafter, the *Force of Levity*, if one may so speak, being greater in such Funnels, the cool Air enters the Room with greater Velocity, and consequently more enters in the same time. This however has its Limits, for Experience shows, that no increased Velocity, so occasion'd, has made the admission of Air thro' the Keyhole equal in quantity to that thro' an open Door; tho' thro' the Door the Current moves slowly, and thro' the Keyhole with great Rapidity.

It remains then to be considered how and where this necessary Quantity of Air from without is to be admitted, so as to be least inconvenient. For, if at the Door, left so much open, the Air thence proceeds directly to the Chimney, and in its way comes cold to your Back and Heels as you sit before your Fire. If you keep the Door shut, and raise a little the Sash of your Window, you feel the same Inconvenience. Various have been the Contrivances to avoid this, such as bringing in fresh Air through Pipes in the Jambs of the Chimney, which, pointing upwards, should blow the Smoke up the Funnel; Opening Passages into the Funnel above, to let in Air for the same purpose. But these produce an Effect contrary to

that intended; for, as it is the constant current of Air passing from the room *thro' the Opening of the Chimney* into the Funnel, which prevents the Smoke coming out into the Room, if you supply the Funnel by other Means or in other ways with the Air it wants, and especially if that Air be cold, you diminish the force of that Current, and the Smoke in its Efforts to enter the Room finds less Resistance.

The wanted Air must then *indispensably* be admitted into the Room, to supply what goes off through the Opening of the Chimney. M. Gauger,¹ a very ingenious and intelligent French Writer on the subject, proposes with Judgment to admit it *above* the Opening of the Chimney; and to prevent Inconvenience from its Coldness, he directs its being made to pass in its Entrance thro' winding Cavities made behind the Iron Back and Sides of the FirePlace, and under the Iron Hearth-Plate; in which Cavities it will be warmed, and even heated, so as to contribute much, instead of cooling, to the Warming of the Room. This Invention is excellent in itself, and may be us'd with Advantage in building new Houses; because the Chimneys may then be so disposed, as to admit conveniently the cold Air to enter such Passages; but in Houses built without such Views, the Chimneys are often so situated, as not to afford that Convenience, without great and expensive Alterations. Easy and cheap Methods, tho' not quite so perfect in themselves, are of more general Utility; and such are the following.

In all Rooms where there is a Fire, the Body of Air warmed and rarefied before the Chimney is continually changing Place, and making room for other Air that is to be warmed in its turn. Part of it enters and goes up the Chimney, and the

¹ Nicolas Gauger (1680-1730), French physicist. — ED.

rest rises and takes place near the Ceiling. If the Room be lofty, that warm Air remains above our Heads as long as it continues warm, and we are little benefited by it, because it does not descend till it is cooler. Few can imagine the Difference of Climate between the upper and lower Parts of such room, who have not tried it by the Thermometer, or by going up a Ladder till their Heads are near the Ceiling. It is then among this warm Air that the wanted Quantity of outward Air is best admitted, with which being mix'd, its Coldness is abated and its Inconvenience diminished so as to become scarce observable. This may be easily done, by drawing down about an Inch the upper Sash of a Window; or, if not moveable, by cutting such a Crevice thro' its Frame; in both which Cases, it will be well to place a thin Shelf of the length, to conceal the Opening, and sloping upward to direct the entering Air horizontally along and under the Ceiling. In some houses the Air may be admitted by such a Crevice made in the Wainscot, Cornish, or Plastering, near the Ceiling and over the Opening of the Chimney. This, if practicable, is to be chosen, because the ent'ring cold Air will there meet with the warmest rising Air from before the Fire, and be soonest tempered by the Mixture. The same kind of Shelf should also be placed here. Another way, and not a very difficult one, is to take out an upper Pane of Glass in one of your Sashes, set in a tin Frame, (Plate, Fig. 2,) giving it two springing angular Sides, and then replacing it, with Hinges below on which it may be turned to open more or less above. It will then have the Appearance of an internal Skylight. By drawing this Pane in, more or less, you may admit what Air you find necessary. Its position will naturally throw that air up and along the ceiling. This is what is called in

France a *Was ist das?* As this is a German Question, the Invention is probably of that Nation, and takes its Name from the frequent asking of that Question when it first appeared. In England, some have of late Years cut a round Hole about 5 Inches Diameter in a Pane of the Sash, and plac'd against it a circular Plate of Tin hung on an Axis, and cut into Vanes, which, being separately bent a little obliquely, are acted upon by the entring Air, so as to force the Plate continually round like the Vanes of a Windmill. This admits the outward Air, and by the continual Whirling of the Vanes, does in some degree disperse it. The Noise, only, is a little inconvenient.

2. A second cause of the Smoking of Chimneys is, *their Openings in the Room being too large*; that is, too wide, too high, or both. Architects in general have no other Ideas of Proportion in the Opening of a Chimney, than what relate to Symmetry and Beauty, respecting the Dimensions of the Room; while its true Proportion, respecting its Function and Utility, depends on quite other Principles; and they might as properly proportion the Step in a Staircase to the Height of the Story, instead of the natural Elevation of Men's Legs in mounting. The Proportion then to be regarded, is what relates to the Height of the Funnel. For as the Funnels in the different Stories of a House are necessarily of different Heights or Lengths, that from the lowest Floor being the highest or longest, and those of the other Floors shorter and shorter, till we come to those in the Garrets, which are of course the shortest; and the Force of Draft being, as already said, in proportion to the height of Funnel filled with rarefied Air; and a Current of Air from the Room into the Chimney, sufficient to fill the Opening, being necessary to oppose and

prevent the Smoke's coming out into the Room; it follows, that the Openings of the longest Funnels may be larger, and that those of the shorter Funnels should be smaller. For, if there be a large Opening to a Chimney that does not draw strongly, the Funnel may happen to be furnish'd with the Air it demands by a Partial current entring on one side of the Opening, and, leaving the other side free of any Opposing Current, may permit the Smoke to issue there into the Room. Much too, of the Force of Draft in a Funnel depends on the degree of Rarefaction in the Air it contains, and that depends on the nearness to the Fire of its Passage in entring the Funnel. If it can enter far from the Fire on each side, or far above the Fire, in a wide or high Opening, it receives little heat in passing by the Fire, and the Contents of the Funnel is by that means less different in Levity from the surrounding Atmosphere, and its Force in drawing consequently weaker. Hence, if too large an Opening be given to Chimneys in upper Rooms, those Rooms will be smoky; on the other Hand, if too small Openings be given to Chimneys in the lower Rooms, the entring air, operating too directly and violently on the Fire, and afterwards strengthening the Draft as it ascends the Funnel, will consume the Fuel too rapidly.

Remedy. As different Circumstances frequently mix themselves in these Matters, it is difficult to give precise Dimensions for the Openings of all Chimneys. Our Fathers made them generally much too large; We have lessen'd them; but they are often still of greater Dimension than they should be, the human Eye not being easily reconcil'd to sudden and great Changes. If you suspect that your Chimney smokes from the too great Dimension of its Opening, contract it by placing Boards so as to lower and narrow it gradually, till

you find the Smoke no longer issues into the Room. The Proportion so found will be that which is proper for that Chimney, and you may employ the Bricklayer or Mason to reduce it accordingly. However, as, in building new Houses, something must be sometimes hazarded, I would make the Openings in my lower Rooms about 30 Inches square and 18 deep, and those in the upper only 18 Inches square and not quite so deep; the intermediate ones diminishing in proportion as the Height of Funnel diminish'd. In the larger Openings, Billets of two feet long, or half the common length of Cordwood, may be burnt conveniently; and for the smaller, such Wood may be saw'd into Thirds. Where Coals are the Fuel, the Grates will be proportion'd to the Openings. The same Depth is nearly necessary to all, the Funnels being all made of a Size proper to admit a Chimney-sweeper. If in large and elegant Rooms Custom or Fancy should require the Appearance of a larger Chimney, it may be form'd of expensive marginal Decorations, in Marble, &c. In time, perhaps, that which is fittest in the nature of things may come to be thought handsomest. But at present when Men and Women in different Countries show themselves dissatisfied with the Forms God has given to their Heads, Waists, and Feet, and pretend to shape them more perfectly, it is hardly to be expected that they will be content always with the best Form of a Chimney. And there are some, I know, so bigotted to the Fancy of a large noble Opening, that rather than change it, they would submit to have damaged Furniture, sore Eyes, and Skins almost smok'd to Bacon.

3. Another cause of smoky Chimneys is *too short a Funnel*. This happens necessarily in some Cases, as where a Chimney is required in a low Building; for if the Funnel be rais'd

high above the Roof, in order to strengthen its Draft, it is then in danger of being blown down, and crushing the Roof in its Fall.

Remedies. Contract the Opening of the Chimney, so as to oblige all the entring Air to pass thro' or very near the Fire; whereby it will be more heated and rarefied, the Funnel itself be more warmed, and its Contents have more of what may be called the Force of Levity, so as to rise strongly, and maintain a good Draft at the Opening.

Or you may in some cases to Advantage, build additional Stories over the low Building, which will support a high Funnel.

If the low Building be us'd as a Kitchen, and a Contraction of the Opening therefore inconvenient, a large one being necessary, at least when there are great Dinners, for the free Management of so many Cooking Utensils; in such Case I would advise the Building of two more Funnels joining to the first, and having three moderate Openings, one to each Funnel, instead of one large one. When there is occasion to use but one, the other two may be kept shut by sliding Plates, hereafter to be describ'd; and two or all of them may be used together when wanted. This will indeed be an Expence, but not a useless one, since your Cooks will work with more comfort, see better than in a smoky Kitchen what they are about, your Victuals will be cleaner drest, and not taste of Smoke, as is often the Case; and, to render the Effect more certain, a Stack of three Funnels may be safely built higher above the Roof than a single Funnel.

The Case of too short a Funnel is more general than would be imagin'd, and often found where one would not expect it. For it is not uncommon, in ill contriv'd Buildings, instead

of having a Funnel for each Room or Fireplace, to bend and turn the Funnel of an upper Room so as to make it enter the Side of another Funnel that comes from below. By this means the upper room Funnel is made short of course, since its Length can only be reckon'd from the Place where it enters the lower-room Funnel; and that Funnel is also shorten'd by all the Distance between the Entrance of the second Funnel and the Top of the Stack: For all that Part being readily supply'd with Air thro' the second Funnel, adds no Strength to the Draft, especially as that Air is cold when there is no Fire in the second Chimney. The only easy Remedy here is, to keep the Opening shut of that Funnel in which there is no Fire.

4. Another very common Cause of the Smoking of Chimneys is *their overpowering one another*. For instance, if there be two Chimneys in one large Room, and you make Fires in both of them, the Doors and Windows close shut, you will find that the greater and stronger Fire shall overpower the weaker, and draw air down its Funnel to supply its own Demand; which Air descending in the weaker Funnel, will drive down its Smoke, and force it into the Room. If, instead of being in one Room, the two Chimneys are in two different Rooms, communicating by a Door, the Case is the same whenever that Door is open. In a very tight House, I have known a Kitchen Chimney on the lowest Floor, when it had a great Fire in it, overpower any other Chimney in the House, and draw Air and Smoke into its Room, as often as the Door was open'd communicating with the StairCase.

Remedy. Take Care that every Room has the Means of supplying itself from without, with the Air its Chimney may

require so that no one of them may be oblig'd to borrow from another, nor under the Necessity of lending. A Variety of these Means have been already describ'd.

5. Another Cause of Smoking is, *when the Tops of Chimneys are commanded by higher Buildings, or by a Hill*, so that the Wind blowing over such Eminences, falls like Water over a Dam, sometimes almost perpendicularly on the Tops of the Chimneys that lie in its way, and beats down the Smoke contain'd in them.

Remedy. That commonly apply'd to this Case is a Turn-cap made of Tin or Plate Iron, covering the Chimney above and on three sides, open on one side, turning on a Spindle, and which being guided or governed by a Vane, always presents its back to the Current. This I believe, may be generally effectual, tho' not certain, as there may be Cases in which it will not succeed. Raising your Funnels, if practicable, so as their Tops may be higher, or at least equal with the commanding Eminence, is more to be depended on. But the turning Cap, being easier and cheaper, should first be try'd. If oblig'd to build in such a Situation, I would chuse to place my Doors on the Side next the Hill, and the Backs of my Chimneys on the furthest Side; for then the Column of Air falling over the Eminence, and of course pressing on that below and forcing it to enter the Doors, or *Was-ist-dases* on that Side, would tend to ballance the Pressure down the Chimneys, and leave the Funnels more free in the Exercise of their Functions.

6. There is another Case of Command, the Reverse of that last mentioned. It is where the commanding Eminence is farther from the Wind than the Chimney commanded. To explain this a Figure may be necessary. Suppose then a

building whose Side *A* happens to be expos'd to the Wind, and forms a kind of Dam against its Progress. (Plate, Fig. 3.) The Air obstructed by this Dam, will, like Water, press and search for Passages thro' it; and finding the Top of the Chimney *B*, below the Top of the Dam, it will force itself down that Funnel, in order to get through by some Door or Window open on the other Side of the Building. And if there be a Fire in such Chimney, its Smoke is of course beat down, and fills the Room.

Remedy. I know of but one, which is to raise such funnel Higher than the Roof, supporting it if necessary by iron Bars. For a Turncap in this Case has no Effect, the damm'd-up-air pressing down thro' it in whatever Position the Wind may have plac'd its Opening.

I know a City in which many Houses are render'd smoky by this Operation. For their Kitchens being built behind, and connected by a Passage with the Houses, and the Tops of the Kitchen Chimneys lower than the Top of the Houses, the whole Side of a Street, when the Wind blows against its back, forms such a Dam as above describ'd; and the Wind so obstructed, forces down those Kitchen Chimneys especially when they have but weak Fires in them to pass thro' the Passage and House into the Street. Kitchen Chimneys, so form'd and situated, have another Inconvenience. In Summer, if you open your Upper Room Windows for Air, a light Breeze blowing over your Kitchen Chimney towards the House, tho' not strong enough to force down its Smoke, as aforesaid, is sufficient to waft it into your Windows, and fill the Rooms with it; which, besides the Disagreeableness, damages your Furniture.

7. Chimneys, otherwise drawing well, are sometimes

made to smoke by *the improper and inconvenient Situation of a Door*. When the Door and Chimney are on the same Side of the Room, as in the Figure, if the Door *A*, being in the Corner, is made to open against the Wall, (Plate, Fig. 4,) which is common, as being there, when open, more out of the Way, it follows, that, when the Door is only open'd in Part, a Current of Air rushing in, passes along the Wall into and across the Opening of the Chimney *B*, and flirts some of the Smoke out into the Room. This happens more certainly when the Door is shutting, for then the Force of the Current is augmented, and becomes very inconvenient to those who, warming themselves by the Fire, happen to sit in its way.

The *remedies* are obvious and easy. Either put an intervening Skreen from the Wall round great part of the Fire-Place; or, which is perhaps preferable, shift the Hinges of your Door, so as it may open the other way, and, when open, throw the Air along the other Wall.

8. A Room, that has no Fire in its Chimney, is sometimes filled with *Smoke, which is receiv'd at the Top of its Funnel, and descends into the Room*. In a former paper I have already explained the descending Currents of Air in cold Funnels; it may not be amiss, however, to repeat here, that Funnels without Fires have an Effect, according to their degree of Coldness or Warmth, on the Air that happens to be contain'd in them. The surrounding Atmosphere is frequently changing its Temperature; but Stacks of Funnels, cover'd from Winds and Sun by the House that contains them, retain a more equal Temperature. If after a warm Season, the outward Air suddenly grows cold, the empty warm Funnels begin to draw strongly upward; that is, they rarefy the Air contain'd in them, which of course rises, cooler

Air enters below to supply its place, is rarefied in its turn, and rises; and this Operation continues till the Funnel grows cooler, or the outward Air warmer, or both, when the Motion ceases. On the other Hand, if after a cold Season, the outward Air suddenly grows warm and of course lighter, the Air contain'd in the cool Funnels, being heavier, descends into the Room; and the warmer Air which enters their Tops, being cool'd in its turn and made heavier, continues to descend; and this Operation goes on, till the Funnels are warmed by the Passing of warm Air thro' them, or the Air itself grows cooler. When the Temperature of the Air and of the Funnels is nearly equal, the difference of Warmth in the Air between Day and Night is sufficient to produce these Currents, the Air will begin to ascend the Funnels as the Cool of the Evening comes on, and this Current will continue till perhaps 9 or 10 o'clock the next Morning, when it begins to hesitate; and as the heat of the Day approaches, it sets downwards, and continues so till towards Evening, when it again hesitates for some time, and then goes upwards constantly during the Night, as before mentioned. Now when Smoke issuing from the Tops of neighbouring Funnels passes over the Tops of Funnels, which are at the Time drawing downwards, as they often are in the Middle part of the Day, such Smoke is of necessity drawn into these Funnels, and descends with the Air into the Chamber.

The *remedy* is to have a Sliding Plate, hereafter describ'd, that will shut perfectly the offending Funnel.

9. Chimneys, which generally draw well, do nevertheless sometimes give Smoke into the Rooms, *it being driven down by strong Winds passing over the Tops of their Funnels*, tho' not descending from any commanding Eminence. This Case

is most frequent where the Funnel is short, and the Opening turn'd from the Wind. It is the more grievous, when it happens to be a cold Wind that produces the Effect, because when you most want your Fire, you are sometimes oblig'd to extinguish it. To understand this, it may be consider'd that the rising light Air, to obtain a free Issue from the Funnel, must push out of its Way or oblige the Air that is over it to rise. In a time of Calm or of little Wind this is done visibly, for we see the Smoke that is brought up by that Air rise in a Column above the Chimney. But when a violent Current of Air, that is, a strong Wind, passes over the Top of a Chimney, its Particles have receiv'd so much Force, which keeps them in a horizontal Direction, and follow each other so rapidly, that the rising light Air has not Strength sufficient to oblige them to quit that Direction and move upwards to permit its Issue. Add to this, that some of the Current passing over that Side of the Funnel which it first meets with, viz. at *A*, (Plate, Fig. 5,) having been compress'd by the Resistance of the Funnel, may expand itself over the Flue, and strike the interior opposite Side at *B*, from whence it may be reflected downwards and from Side to Side in the Direction of the prick'd Line *c c c*.

Remedies. In some Places, particularly in Venice, where they have not Stacks of Chimneys but single Flues, the Custom is, to open or widen the Top of the Flue, rounding in the true Form of a Funnel; (Plate, Fig. 6;) which some think may prevent the Effect just mentioned, for that the Wind blowing over one of the Edges into the Funnel, may be slanted out again on the other Side by its Form. I have had no Experience of this; but I have lived in a Windy Country, where the contrary is practis'd, the Tops of the Flues being

narrow'd inwards, so as to form a Slit for the Issue of the Smoke, long as the Breadth of the Funnel, and only 4 Inches wide. This seems to have been contriv'd on a Supposition, that the Entry of the Wind would thereby be obstructed; and perhaps it might have been imagined, that the whole Force of the rising warm Air being condens'd, as it were, in the narrow Opening, would thereby be strengthen'd, so as to overcome the Resistance of the Wind. This however did not always succeed; for when the Wind was at NorthEast, and blew fresh, the Smoke was forc'd down by Fits into the Room I commonly sat in, so as to oblige me to shift the Fire into another. The Position of the Slit of this Funnel was indeed N. E^t and S. W^t. Perhaps if it had lain across the Wind, the Effect might have been different. But on this I can give no Certainty. It seems a matter proper to be re-ferr'd to Experiment. Possibly a Turncap might have been serviceable, but it was not tried.

Chimneys have not been long in Use in England. I remember to have formerly read in some very old book, which remark'd the then modern Improvements of living, and mentioned, among others, the Convenience of Chimneys. "Our ForeFathers," said the Author, "had no Chimneys. There was in each DwellingHouse only one Place for a Fire, and the Smoke went out thro' a Hole in the Roof; but now there is scarce a Gentleman's House in England that has not at least one Chimney in it." When there was but one Chimney, its Top might then be open'd as a Funnel, and perhaps, borrowing the Form from the Venetians, it was then the Flue of a Chimney got that name. Such is now the Growth of Luxury, that in both England and France we must have a Chimney for every Room, and in some Houses every

Possessor of a Chamber, and almost every Servant, will have a Fire; so that the Flues being necessarily built in Stacks, the opening of each as a Funnel is impracticable. This Change of Manners soon consum'd the Firewood of England, and will soon render Fuel extreamly scarce and dear in France, if the Use of Coals be not introduc'd in that latter kingdom as it has been in the former, where it at first met with Opposition; for there is extant in the Records of one of Queen Elizabeth's Parliaments, a Motion made by a Member, reciting, "That many Dyers, Brewers, Smiths, and other Artificers of London, had of late taken to the Use of Pitcoal for their Fires, instead of Wood, which fill'd the Air with noxious Vapours and Smoke, very prejudicial to the Health, particularly of Persons coming out of the Country;" and therefore moving, "that a Law might pass to prohibit the Use of such Fuel (at least during the Session of Parliament) by those Artificers." It seems it was not then commonly us'd in private Houses. Its suppos'd Unwholesomeness was an Objection. Luckily the Inhabitants of London have got over that Objection, and now think it rather contributes to render their Air salubrious, as they have had no general pestilential Disorder since the general Use of Coals, when, before it, such were frequent. Paris still burns Wood at an enormous Expence continually augmenting, the Inhabitants having still that Prejudice to overcome. In Germany, you are happy in the Use of Stoves, which save Fuel wonderfully: Your People are very ingenious in the Management of Fire; but they may still learn something in that Art from the Chinese, whose Country being greatly populous and fully cultivated, has little room left for the growth of Wood, and, having not much other Fuel that is good, they have been forc'd

upon many Inventions, during a Course of Ages, for making a little Fire go as far as possible.

I have thus gone thro' all the common Causes of the Smoking of Chimneys, that I can at present recollect as having fallen under my Observation; communicating the Remedies that I have known successfully used for the different Cases, together with the Principles on which both the Disease and the Remedy depend, and confessing my Ignorance wherever I have been sensible of it. You will do well, if you publish, as you propose, this Letter, to add in Notes, or as you please, such Observations as may have occur'd to your attentive Mind; and, if other Philosophers will do the same, this Part of Science, tho' humble, yet of great Utility, may in time be perfected. For many Years past, I have rarely met with a Case of a Smoky Chimney, which has not been solvable on these Principles, and cur'd by these Remedies, where People have been willing to apply them; which is indeed not always the Case; for many have Prejudices in favour of the Nostrums of pretending Chimney Doctors and Fumists, and some have Conceits and Fancies of their own, which they rather chuse to try, than to lengthen a Funnel, alter the Size of an Opening, or admit Air into a Room, however necessary; for some are as much afraid of fresh Air as persons in the Hydrophobia are of fresh Water. I myself had formerly this Prejudice, this *Aërophobia*, as I now account it; and, dreading the suppos'd dangerous Effects of cool Air, I consider'd it as an Enemy, and clos'd with extreme care every Crevice in the Rooms I inhabited.

Experience has convinced me of my Error. I now look upon fresh Air as a Friend; I even sleep with an open Window. I am persuaded, that no common Air from without

is so unwholesome, as the Air within a close Room, that has been often breath'd and not changed. Moist Air, too, which formerly I thought pernicious, gives me now no Apprehensions; for, considering that no Dampness of Air apply'd to the Outside of my Skin can be equal to what is apply'd to and touches it within, my whole Body being full of Moisture, and finding that I can lie two hours in a Bath twice a Week, cover'd with Water, which certainly is much damper than any Air can be, and this for Years together, without catching Cold, or being in any other manner disorder'd by it, I no longer dread mere Moisture, either in Air or in Sheets or Shirts: And I find it of Importance to the Happiness of Life, the being freed from vain Terrors, especially of objects that we are every day expos'd inevitably to meet with. You Physicians have of late happily discover'd, after a contrary Opinion had prevail'd some Ages, that fresh and cool Air does good to Persons in the SmallPox and other Fevers. It is to be hop'd, that in another Century or two we may all find out, that it is not bad even for People in Health. And as to moist Air, here I am at this present Writing in a Ship with above 40 Persons, who have had no other but moist Air to breathe for 6 Weeks past; every thing we touch is damp, and nothing dries, yet we are all as healthy as we should be on the Mountains of Switzerland, whose Inhabitants are not more so than those of Bermuda or St. Helena, Islands on whose Rocks the Waves are dash'd into Millions of Particles, which fill the Air with Damp, but produce no Diseases, the Moisture being pure, unmix'd with the poisonous Vapours arising from putrid Marshes and stagnant Pools, in which many Insects die and corrupt the Water. These Places only, in my Opinion (which however I submit to yours,)

afford unwholsome Air; and that it is not the mere Water contain'd in damp Air, but the volatile Particles of corrupted animal Matter mix'd with that Water, which renders such Air pernicious to those who breathe it. And I imagine it a Cause of the same kind that renders the Air in close Rooms, where the perspirable Matter is breath'd over and over again by a number of assembled People, so hurtful to Health. After being in such a Situation, many find themselves affected by that *Febricula*, which the English alone call a *Cold*, and, perhaps from the Name, imagine that they caught the malady by *going out* of the Room, when it was in fact by being in it.

You begin to think, that I wander from my Subject, and go out of my Depth. So I return again to my Chimneys.

We have of late many Lecturers in Experimental Philosophy. I have wish'd that some of them would study this Branch of that Science, and give Experiments in it as a Part of their Lectures. The addition to their present Apparatus need not be very expensive. A number of little Representations of Rooms compos'd each of 5 Panes of Sash Glass, fram'd in Wood at the Corners, with proportionable Doors, and moveable Glass Chimneys, with Openings of different Sizes, and different Lengths of Funnel, and some of the Rooms so contriv'd as to communicate on occasion with others, so as to form different Combinations, and exemplify different Cases; with quantities of green Wax Taper cut into Pieces of an Inch and half, 16 of which stuck together in a Square, and lit, would make a strong Fire for a little Glass Chimney, and blown out would continue to burn and give Smoke as long as desired. With such an Apparatus all the Operations of Smoke and rarify'd Air in Rooms and Chimneys might be seen thro' their transparent Sides; and the Effect of Winds

on Chimneys, commanded or otherwise, might be shown by letting the entring air blow upon them thro' an opened Window of the Lecturer's Chamber, where it would be constant while he kept a good Fire in his Chimney. By the help of such Lectures our Fumists would become better instructed. At present they have generally but one Remedy, which perhaps they have known effectual in some one Case of Smoky Chimneys, and they apply that indiscriminately to all the other Cases, without success, — but not without Expence to their Employers.

With all the Science, however, that a man shall suppose himself possess'd of in this Article, he may sometimes meet with Cases that shall puzzle him. I once lodg'd in a house at London, which, in a little Room, had a single Chimney and Funnel. The Opening was very small, yet it did not keep in the Smoke, and all Attempts to have a Fire in this room were fruitless. I could not imagine the Reason, till at length observing that the Chamber over it, which had no Fireplace in it, was always filled with Smoke when a Fire was kindled below, and that the Smoke came thro' the Cracks and Crevices of the Wainscot, I had the Wainscot taken down, and discover'd that the Funnel, which went up behind it, had a Crack many feet in Length, and wide enough to admit my Arm, a Breach very dangerous with regard to Fire, and occasion'd probably by an apparent irregular Settling of one Side of the House. The Air entring this Breach freely, destroy'd the drawing Force of the Funnel. The Remedy would have been, filling up the Breach, or rather rebuilding the Funnel; but the Landlord rather chose to stop up the Chimney.

Another puzzling Case I met with at a Friend's Country

House near London. His best Room had a Chimney, in which he told me he never could have a Fire, for all the Smoke came out into the Room. I flatter'd myself I could easily find the Cause, and prescribe the Cure. I had a Fire made there, and found it as he said. I opened the Door, and perceived it was not want of Air. I made a temporary Contraction of the Opening of the Chimney, and found that it was not its being too large, that caus'd the Smoke to issue. I went out and look'd up at the Top of the Chimney; its Funnel was join'd in the same Stack with others, some of them shorter, that drew very well, and I saw nothing to prevent its doing the same. In fine, after every other Examination I could think of, I was oblig'd to own the Insufficiency of my Skill. But my friend, who made no Pretension to such kind of Knowledge, afterwards discover'd the Cause himself. He got to the Top of the Funnel by a Ladder, and looking down, found it filled with Twiggs and Straw cemented by Earth, and lin'd with Feathers. It seems the House, after being built, had stood empty some Years before he occupy'd it; and he concluded, that some large Birds had taken the Advantage of its retired Situation to make their Nest there. The Rubbish, considerable in Quantity, being removed, and the Funnel cleared, the Chimney drew well, and gave Satisfaction.

In general, Smoke is a very tractable Thing, easily governed and directed when one knows the Principles, and is well informed of the Circumstances. You know I made it *descend* in my Pennsylvania Stove. I formerly had a more simple Construction, in which the same Effect was produc'd, but visible to the eye (Plate, Figure 7). It was compos'd of two plates, *A B* and *C D*, plac'd as in the figure. The lower

plate *A B*, rested with its Edge in the Angle made by the Hearth with the Back of the Chimney. The upper Plate was fix'd to the Breast, and lapt over the lower about 6 Inches, leaving a space of 4 Inches wide and the length of the Plates (near 2 feet) between them. Every other Passage of Air into the Funnel was well stopt. When therefore a Fire was made at *E*, for the first time with Charcoal, till the Air in the Funnel was a little heated thro' the Plates, and then Wood laid on, the Smoke would rise to *A*, turn over the Edge of that Plate, descend to *D*, then turn under the Edge of the upper Plate, and go up the Chimney. It was pretty to see, but of no great Use. Placing therefore the under Plate in a higher Situation, I remov'd the upper plate *C D*, and placed it perpendicularly (Plate, Fig. 8), so that the upper Edge of the lower Plate *A B* came within about 3 Inches of it, and might be push'd further from it, or suffer'd to come nearer to it, by a moveable Wedge between them. The Flame then ascending from the Fire at *E*, was carried to strike the upper Plate, made it very hot, and its Heat rose and spread with the rarefied Air into the Room.

I believe you have seen in use with me the Contrivance of a Sliding Plate over the Fire, seemingly plac'd to oppose the rising of the Smoke, leaving but a small Passage for it, between the Edge of the Plate and the Back of the Chimney. It is particularly describ'd, and its Uses explain'd, in my former printed Letter, and I mention it here only as another instance of the Tractability of Smoke.

What is called the Staffordshire Chimney, affords an Example of the same kind. The Opening of the Chimney is brick'd up even with the Fore Edge of its Jambs, leaving open only a Passage over the Grate of the same

width, and perhaps 8 Inches high. The Grate consists of semicircular Bars, their upper Bar of the greatest Diameter, the others under it smaller and smaller, so that it has the Appearance of half a round Basket. It is, with the Coals it contains, wholly without the Wall that shuts up the Chimney, yet the Smoke bends and enters the Passage above it, the Draft being strong, because no Air can enter that is not obliged to pass near or through the Fire, so that all that the Funnel is fill'd with is much heated, and of course much rarefied.

Much more of the Prosperity of a Winter Country depends on the Plenty and Cheapness of Fuel, than is generally imagined. In Travelling I have observed, that in those Parts where the Inhabitants can have neither Wood, nor Coal, nor Turf, but at excessive Prices, the Working People live in miserable Hovels, are ragged, and have nothing comfortable about them. But when Fuel is cheap (or where they have the Art of managing it to Advantage), they are well furnish'd with Necessaries, and have decent Habitations. The obvious Reason is, that the Working Hours of such People are the profitable Hours, and they who cannot afford sufficient Fuel have fewer such Hours in the 24, than those who have it cheap and plenty: For much of the domestic Work of poor Women, such as Spinning, Sewing, Knitting; and of the Men, in those Manufactures that require little bodily Exercise, cannot well be perform'd where the Fingers are numb'd with Cold. Those People, therefore, in cold Weather, are induc'd to go to bed sooner, and lie longer in a Morning, than they would do, if they could have good Fires or warm Stoves to sit by; and their Hours of Work are not sufficient to produce the Means of Comfortable

Subsistence. Those public Works, therefore, such as Roads, Canals, &c., by which Fuel may be brought cheap into such Countries from distant Places, are of great Utility; and those who promote them may be reckoned among the Benefactors of Mankind.

I have great Pleasure in having thus comply'd with your Request, and in the Reflection, that the Friendship you honour me with, and in which I have ever been so happy, has continued so many Years without the smallest Interruption. Our Distance from each other is now augmented, and Nature must soon put an End to the possibility of my continuing our Correspondence; but, if Consciousness and Memory remain in a future State, my Esteem and Respect for you, my dear Friend, will be everlasting.

B. FRANKLIN.

Notes to the Letter upon Chimneys

NO. I

The latest work on architecture, that I have seen, is that entitled *Nutshells*, which appears to be written by a very ingenious man, and contains a table of the proportions of the openings of chimneys; but they relate solely to the proportions he gives his rooms, without the smallest regard to the funnels. And he remarks, respecting those proportions, that they are similar to the harmonic divisions of a monochord.¹ He does not indeed lay much stress on this; but it

¹ "It may be just remarked here, that upon comparing these proportions with those arising from the common divisions of the monochord, it happens, that the first answers to unisons; and, although the second is a discord, the third answers to the third minor, the fourth to the third major, the fifth to the fourth, the sixth to the fifth, and the seventh to the octave." — *Nutshells*, page 85. — ED.

shows that we like the appearance of principles; and where we have not true ones, we have some satisfaction in producing such as are imaginary.

No. II

The description of the sliding plates here promised, and which have been since brought into use under various names, with some immaterial changes, is contained in a former letter to James Bowdoin.

1599. DESCRIPTION OF A NEW STOVE FOR BURNING OF PITCOAL, AND CONSUMING ALL ITS SMOKE.¹

TOWARDS the end of the last century an ingenious French philosopher, whose name I am sorry I cannot recollect, exhibited an experiment to show that very offensive things might be burnt in the middle of a chamber, such as woollen rags, feathers, &c., without creating the least smoke or smell. The machine in which the experiment was made, if I remember right, was of this form, (Plate XV. Fig. 1,) made of plate iron. Some clear burning charcoals were put into the opening of the short tube *A*, and supported there by the grate *B*. The air, as soon as the tubes grew warm, would ascend in the longer leg *C* and go out at *D*, consequently air must enter at *A* descending to *B*. In this course it must be heated by the burning coals through which it passed, and rise more forcibly in the longer tube, in propot-

¹ From Transactions of The American Philosophical Society (Old Series) II: 57. It was read at a meeting of the Society, January 28, 1786. — ED.

tion to its degree of heat or rarefaction, and length of that tube. For such a machine is a kind of inverted syphon; and, as the greater weight of water in the longer leg of a common syphon in descending is accompanied by an ascent of the same fluid in the shorter; so, in this inverted syphon, the greater quantity of levity of air in the longer leg, in rising is accompanied by the descent of air in the shorter. The things to be burned being laid on the hot coals at *A*, the smoke must descend through those coals, and be converted into flame, which, after destroying the offensive smell, came out at the end of the longer tube as mere heated air.

Whoever would repeat this experiment with success, must take care that the part *A B*, of the short tube, be quite full of burning coals, so that no part of the smoke may descend and pass by them without going through them, and being converted into flame; and that the longer tube be so heated as that the current of ascending hot air is established in it before the things to be burnt are laid on the coals; otherwise there will be a disappointment.

It does not appear, either in the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences, or Philosophical Transactions of the English Royal Society, that any improvement was ever made of this ingenious experiment, by applying it to uestful purposes. But there is a German book, entitled *Vulcanus Famulans*, by John George Leutmann, P. D., printed at Wirtemberg, in 1723, which describes, among a great variety of other stoves for warming rooms, one, which seems to have been formed on the same principle, and probably from the hint thereby given, though the French experiment is not mentioned. This book being scarce, I have translated the chapter describing the stove, viz.

"CHAP. VII.

"On a stove, which draws downwards.

"Here follows the description of a sort of stove, which can easily be removed, and again replaced at pleasure. This drives the fire down under itself, and gives no smoke, but, however, a very unwholesome vapour.

"In the figure, *A* is an iron vessel like a funnel, (Plate XV. Fig. 20,) in diameter at the top about twelve inches, at the bottom near the grate about five inches; its height twelve inches. This is set on the barrel *C*, which is ten inches diameter and two feet long, closed at each end *E E*. From one end rises a pipe or flue about four inches diameter, on which other pieces of pipe are set, which are gradually contracted to *D*, where the opening is but about two inches. Those pipes must together be at least four feet high. *B* is an iron grate. *F F* are iron handles guarded with wood, by which the stove is to be lifted and moved. It stands on three legs. Care must be taken to stop well all the joints, that no smoke may leak through.

"When this stove is to be used, it must first be carried into the kitchen and placed in the chimney near the fire. There burning wood must be laid and left upon its grate till the barrel *C* is warm, and the smoke no longer rises at *A*, but descends towards *C*. Then it is to be carried into the room which it is to warm. When once the barrel *C* is warm, fresh wood may be thrown into the vessel *A* as often as one pleases, the flame descends and without smoke, which is so consumed that only a vapour passes out at *D*.

"As this vapour is unwholesome, and affects the head, one may be freed from it, by fixing in the wall of the room

an inverted funnel, such as people use to hang over lamps, through which their smoke goes out as through a chimney. This funnel carries out all the vapour cleverly, so that one finds no inconvenience from it, even though the opening *D* be placed a span below the mouth of the said funnel *G*. The neck of the funnel is better when made gradually bending, than if turned in a right angle.

“The cause of the draft downwards in the stove is the pressure of the outward air, which, falling into the vessel *A* in a column of twelve inches diameter, finds only a resisting passage at the grate *B*, of five inches, and one at *D*, of two inches, which are much too weak to drive it back again; besides, *A* stands much higher than *B*, and so the pressure on it is greater and more forcible, and beats down the flame to that part where it finds the least resistance. Carrying the machine first to the kitchen fire for preparation is on this account, that in the beginning the fire and smoke naturally ascend, till the air in the close barrel *C* is made thinner by the warmth. When that vessel is heated, the air in it is rarefied, and then all the smoke and fire descends under it.

“The wood should be thoroughly dry, and cut into pieces five or six inches long, to fit it for being thrown into the funnel *A*.”

It appears to me, by Mr. Leutmann’s explanation of the operation of this machine, that he did not understand the principles of it, whence I conclude he was not the inventor of it; and by the description of it, wherein the opening at *A* is made so large, and the pipe *E D*, so short, I am persuaded he never made nor saw the experiment, for the first ought to be much smaller, and the last much higher, or it hardly will

succeed. The carrying it in the kitchen, too, every time the fire should happen to be out, must be so troublesome, that it is not likely ever to have been in practice, and probably has never been shown but as a philosophical experiment. The funnel for conveying the vapour out of the room would besides have been uncertain in its operation, as a wind blowing against its mouth would drive the vapour back.

The stove I am about to describe was also formed on the idea given by the French experiment, and completely carried into execution before I had any knowledge of the German invention; which I wonder should remain so many years in a country, where men are so ingenious in the management of fire, without receiving long since the improvements I have given it.

Description of the Parts.

A, the bottom plate which lies flat upon the hearth, with its partitions, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, (Plate, Fig. 2,) that are cast with it, and a groove *Z Z*, in which are to slide the bottom edges of the small plates *Y, Y*, figure 12; which plates meeting at *X* close the front.

B 1, figure 3, is the cover plate showing its under side, with the grooves 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, to receive the top edges of the partitions that are fixed to the bottom plate. It shows also the grate *W W*, the bars of which are cast in the plate, and a groove *V V*, which comes right over the groove *Z Z*, figure 2, receiving the upper edges of the small sliding plates *Y, Y*, figure 12.

B 2, figure 4, shows the upper side of the same plate, with a square impression or groove for receiving the bottom mouldings *T T T T* of the three-sided box *C*, figure 5, which is cast in one piece.

D, figure 6, its cover, showing its under side with grooves to receive the upper edges *S S S* of the sides of *C*, figure 5, also a groove *R R*, which, when the cover is put on, comes right over another *Q Q* in *C*, figure 5, between which is to slide

E, figure 7, the front plate of the box.

P, a hole three inches diameter through the cover *D*, figure 6, over which hole stands the vase *F*, figure 8, which has a corresponding hole two inches diameter, through its bottom.

The top of the vase opens at *O O O*, figure 8, and turns back upon a hinge behind, when coals are to be put in; the vase has a grate within at *N N* of cast iron *H*, figure 9, and a hole in the top, one and a half inches diameter, to admit air, and to receive the ornamental brass gilt flame *M*, figure 10, which stands in that hole, and, being itself hollow and open, suffers air to pass through it to the fire.

G, figure 11, is a drawer of plate iron, that slips in between in the partitions 2 and 3, figure 2, to receive the falling ashes. It is concealed when the small sliding plates *Y, Y*, figure 12, are shut together.

I I I I, figure 8, is a niche built of brick in the chimney, and plastered. It closes the chimney over the vase, but leaves two funnels, one in each corner, communicating with the bottom box *K K*, figure 2.

Dimensions of the Parts.

	FEET.	IN.
Front of the bottom box,	2	0
Height of its partitions,	0	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Length of No. 1, 2, 3, and 4, each,	1	3
Length of No. 5 and 6, each,	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$

Breadth of the passage between No. 2 and		
3,	○	6
Breadth of the other passages, each,	○	$3\frac{1}{2}$
Breadth of the grate,	○	$6\frac{1}{2}$
Length of ditto,	○	8
Bottom moulding of box <i>C</i> , square,	I	○
Height of the sides of ditto,	○	4
Length of the back side,	○	10
Length of the right and left sides, each,	○	$9\frac{1}{2}$
Length of the front plate <i>E</i> , where longest,	○	11
The cover <i>D</i> , square,	○	12
Hole in ditto, diameter,		3
Sliding plates <i>Y</i> , <i>Y</i> , their length, each,	I	○
————— their breadth, each,	○	$4\frac{1}{2}$
Drawer <i>G</i> , its length,	I	○
————— breadth,	○	$5\frac{3}{4}$
————— depth,	○	4
————— <i>G</i> , depth of its further end, only,	○	1
Grate <i>H</i> in the vase, its diameter to the		
extremity of its knobs,	○	$5\frac{3}{4}$
Thickness of the bars at top,	○	$○\frac{1}{4}$
————— at bottom, less,	○	○
Depth of the bars at the top,	○	$○\frac{3}{4}$
Height of the vase,	I	6
Diameter of the opening <i>O O</i> , in the clear,	○	8
Diameter of the air hole at top,	○	$1\frac{1}{2}$
————— of the flame hole at bottom,	○	2

To fix this Machine.

Spread mortar on the hearth to bed the bottom plate *A*, then lay that plate level, equally distant from each jamb,

and projecting out as far as you think proper. Then putting some Windsor loam in the grooves of the cover *B*, lay that on; trying the sliding plates *Y*, *Y*, to see if they move freely in the grooves *Z Z*, *V V*, designed for them.

Then begin to build the niche, observing to leave the square corners of the chimney unfilled; for they are to be funnels. And observe also to leave a free open communication between the passages at *K*, *K*, and the bottom of those funnels, and mind to close the chimney above the top of the niche, that no air may pass up that way. The concave back of the niche will rest on the circular iron partition 1 *A* 4, figure 2, then, with a little loam, put on the box *C* over the grate, the open side of the box in front.

Then, with loam in three of its grooves, the groove *R R* being left clean, and brought directly over the groove *Q Q* in the box, put on the cover *D*, trying the front plate *E*, to see if it slides freely in those grooves.

Lastly, set on the vase, which has small holes in the moulding of its bottom to receive two iron pins that rise out of the plate *D* at *I*, *I*, for the better keeping it steady.

Then putting in the grate *H*, which rests on its three knobs *h h h* against the inside of the vase, and slipping the drawer into its place; the machine is fit for use.

To use it.

Let the first fire be made after eight in the evening, or before eight in the morning, for at those times and between those hours all night, there is usually a draft up a chimney, though it has long been without fire; but between those hours in the day there is often, in a cold chimney, a draft down-

wards, when, if you attempt to kindle a fire, the smoke will come into the room.

But to be certain of your proper time, hold a flame over the air hole at the top. If the flame is drawn strongly down for a continuance, without whiffing, you may begin to kindle a fire.

First put in a few charcoals on the grate *H*.

Lay some small sticks on the charcoals.

Lay some pieces of paper on the sticks.

Kindle the paper with a candle.

Then shut down the top, and the air will pass down through the air hole, blow the flame of the paper down through the sticks, kindle them, and their flame passing lower, kindles the charcoal.

When the charcoal is well kindled, lay on it the sea-coals, observing not to choak the fire by putting on too much at first.

The flame descending through the hole in the bottom of the vase, and that in plate *D*, into the box *C*, passes down farther through the grate *WW* in plate *B* 1, then passes horizontally towards the back of the chimney; there dividing, and turning to the right and left, one part of it passes round the far end of the partition 2, then coming forward it turns round the near end of partition 1, then moving backward it arrives at the opening into the bottom of one of the upright corner funnels behind the niche, through which it ascends into the chimney, thus heating that half of the box and that side of the niche. The other part of the divided flame passes round the far end of partition 3, round the near end of partition 4, and so into and up the other corner funnel, thus heating the other half of the box, and the other side of the

niche. The vase itself, and the box *C*, will also be very hot, and the air surrounding them being heated, and rising, as it cannot get into the chimney, it spreads in the room, colder air succeeding is warmed in its turn, rises and spreads, till by the continual circulation the whole is warmed.

If you should have occasion to make your first fire at hours not so convenient as those above mentioned, and when the chimney does not draw, do not begin it in the vase, but in one or more of the passages of the lower plate, first covering the mouth of the vase. After the chimney has drawn a while with the fire thus low, and begins to be a little warm, you may close those passages and kindle another fire in the box *C*, leaving its sliding shutter a little open; and when you find, after some time, that the chimney, being warmed, draws forcibly, you may shut that passage, open your vase, and kindle your fire there, as above directed. The chimney well warmed by the first day's fire will continue to draw constantly all winter, if fires are made daily.

You will, in the management of your fire, have need of the following implements;

A pair of small light tongs, twelve or fifteen inches long; Plate, figure 13.

A light poker about the same length, with a flat broad point, figure 14.

A rake to draw ashes out of the passages of the lower plate, where the lighter kind escaping the ash-box will gather by degrees, and perhaps once in a week or ten days require being removed, figure 15.

And a fork with its prongs wide enough to slip on the neck of the vase cover, in order to raise and open it when hot, to put in fresh coals, figure 16.

In the management of this stove, there are certain precautions to be observed at first, with attention, till they become habitual. To avoid the inconvenience of smoke, see that the grate *H* be clear before you begin to light a fresh fire. If you find it clogged with cinders and ashes, turn it up with your tongs and let them fall upon the grate below; the ashes will go through it, and the cinders may be raked off and returned into the vase when you would burn them. Then see that all the sliding plates are in their places and close shut, that no air may enter the stove but through the round opening at the top of the vase. And to avoid the inconvenience of dust from the ashes, let the ash-drawer be taken out of the room to be emptied; and, when you rake the passages, do it when the draft of the air is strong inwards, and put the ashes carefully into the ash-box, that remaining in its place.

If, being about to go abroad, you would prevent your fire burning in your absence, you may do it by taking the brass flame from the top of the vase, and covering the passage with a round tin plate, which will prevent the entry of more air than barely sufficient to keep a few of the coals alive. When you return, though some hours absent, by taking off the tin plate and admitting the air, your fire will soon be recovered.

The effect of this machine, well managed, is to burn not only the coals, but all the smoke of the coals, so that while the fire is burning, if you go out and observe the top of your chimney, you will see no smoke issuing, nor any thing but clear warm air, which as usual makes the bodies seen through it appear waving.

But let none imagine from this, that it may be a cure for bad or smoky chimneys, much less, that, as it burns the

smoke, it may be used in a room that has no chimney. 'Tis by the help of a good chimney, the higher the better, that it produces its effect; and though a flue of plate iron sufficiently high might be raised in a very lofty room, the management to prevent all disagreeable vapor would be too nice for common practice, and small errors would have unpleasing consequences.

It is certain, that clean iron yields no offensive smell when heated. Whatever of that kind you perceive, where there are iron stoves, proceeds therefore from some foulness burning or fuming on their surface. They should therefore never be spit upon, or greased, nor should any dust be suffered to lie upon them. But, as the greatest care will not always prevent these things, it is well once a week to wash the stove with soap lees and a brush, rinsing it with clean water.

The Advantages of this Stove.

1. The chimney does not grow foul, nor ever need sweeping; for as no smoke enters it, no soot can form in it.

2. The air heated over common fires instantly quits the room and goes up the chimney with the smoke; but in the stove, it is obliged to descend in flame and pass through the long winding horizontal passages, communicating its heat to a body of iron plate, which, having thus time to receive the heat, communicates the same to the air of the room, and thereby warms it to a greater degree.

3. The whole of the fuel is consumed by being turned into flame, and you have the benefit of its heat; whereas, in common chimneys, a great part goes away in smoke which you see as it rises, but it affords you no rays of warmth.

One may obtain some notion of the quantity of fuel thus wasted in smoke, by reflecting on the quantity of soot that a few weeks firing will lodge against the sides of the chimney, and yet this is formed only of those particles of the column of smoke that happen to touch the sides in its ascent. How much more must have passed off in the air? And we know that this soot is still fuel; for it will burn and flame as such, and when hard caked together is indeed very like and almost as solid as the coal it proceeds from. The destruction of your fuel goes on nearly in the same quantity, whether in smoke or in flame; but there is no comparison in the difference of heat given. Observe when fresh coals are first put on your fire, what a body of smoke arises. This smoke is for a long time too cold to take flame. If you then plunge a burning candle into it, the candle, instead of inflaming the smoke, will instantly be itself extinguished. Smoke must have a certain degree of heat to be inflammable. As soon as it has acquired that degree, the approach of a candle will inflame the whole body, and you will be very sensible of the difference of the heat it gives. A still easier experiment may be made with the candle itself. Hold your hand near the side of its flame, and observe the heat it gives; then blow it out, the hand remaining in the same place, and observe what heat may be given by the smoke that rises from the still burning snuff. You will find it very little. And yet that smoke has in it the substance of so much flame, and will instantly produce it, if you hold another candle above it so as to kindle it. Now the smoke from the fresh coals laid on this stove, instead of ascending and leaving the fire while too cold to burn, being obliged to descend through the burning coals, receives among them that degree of heat which converts it into flame, and the heat of

that flame is communicated to the air of the room, as above explained.

4. The flame from the fresh coals laid on in this stove, descending through the coals already ignited, preserves them long from consuming, and continues them in the state of red coals as long as the flame continues that surrounds them, by which means the fires made in this stove are of much longer duration than in any other, and fewer coals are therefore necessary for a day. This is a very material advantage indeed. That flame should be a kind of pickle, to preserve burning coals from consuming, may seem a paradox to many, and very unlikely to be true, as it appeared to me the first time I observed the fact. I must therefore relate the circumstances, and shall mention an easy experiment, by which my reader may be in possession of every thing necessary to the understanding of it. In the first trial I made of this kind of stove, which was constructed of thin plate iron, I had, instead of the vase, a kind of inverted pyramid like a mill-hopper; and fearing at first that the small grate contained in it might be clogged by cynders, and the passage of the flame sometimes obstructed, I ordered a little door near the grate, by means of which I might on occasion clear it. Though, after the stove was made and before I tried it, I began to think this precaution superfluous, from an imagination, that the flame being contracted in the narrow part where the grate was placed, would be more powerful in consuming what it should there meet with, and that any cynders between or near the bars would be presently destroyed and the passage opened.

After the stove was fixed and in action, I had a pleasure now and then in opening that door a little, to see through

the crevice how the flame descended among the red coals; and, observing once a single coal lodged on the bars in the middle of the focus, a fancy took me to observe by my watch in how short a time it would be consumed. I looked at it long without perceiving it to be at all diminished, which surprised me greatly. At length it occurred to me, that I and many others had seen the same thing thousands of times, in the conservation of the red coal formed in the snuff of a burning candle, which, while enveloped in flame, and thereby prevented from the contact of passing air, is long continued and augments instead of diminishing, so that we are often obliged to remove it by the snuffers, or bend it out of the flame into the air, where it consumes presently to ashes. I then supposed, that to consume a body by fire, passing air was necessary to receive and carry off the separated particles of the body; and that the air passing in the flame of my stove, and in the flame of a candle, being already saturated with such particles, could not receive more, and therefore left the coal undiminished as long as the outward air was prevented from coming to it by the surrounding flame, which kept it in a situation somewhat like that of charcoal in a well luted crucible, which, though long kept in a strong fire, comes out unconsumed.

An easy experiment will satisfy any one of this conserving power of flame enveloping red coal. Take a small stick of deal or other wood the size of a goose quill, and hold it horizontally and steadily in the flame of the candle above the wick, without touching it, but in the body of the flame. The wood will first be inflamed, and burn beyond the edge of the flame of the candle, perhaps a quarter of an inch. When the flame of the wood goes out, it will leave a red coal at the end

of the stick, part of which will be in the flame of the candle and part out in the air. In a minute or two you will perceive the coal in the air diminish gradually, so as to form a neck; while the part in the flame continues of its first size, and at length the neck being quite consumed, it drops off; and, by rolling it between your fingers when extinguished, you will find it still a solid coal.

However, as one cannot be always putting on fresh fuel in this stove to furnish a continual flame, as is done in a candle, the air in the intervals of time gets at the red coals and consumes them. Yet the conservation while it lasted, so much delayed the consumption of the coals, that two fires, one made in the morning, and the other in the afternoon, each made by only a hatful of coals, were sufficient to keep my writing room, about sixteen feet square and ten high, warm a whole day. The fire kindled at seven in the morning would burn till noon; and, all the iron of the machine with the walls of the niche being thereby heated the room kept warm till evening, when another smaller fire kindled kept it warm till midnight.

Instead of the sliding plate *E*, which shuts the front of the box *C*, I sometimes used another, which had a pane of glass, or, which is better, of Muscovy talc, that the flame might be seen descending from the bottom of the vase and passing in a column through the box *C*, into the cavities of the bottom plate, like water falling from a funnel, admirable to such as are not acquainted with the nature of the machine, and in itself a pleasing spectacle.

Every utensil, however properly contrived to serve its purpose, requires some practice before it can be used adroitly. Put into the hands of a man for the first time a gimlet or a

hammer, (very simple instruments,) and tell him the use of them, he shall neither bore a hole or drive a nail with the dexterity and success of another, who has been accustomed to handle them. The beginner, therefore, in the use of this machine, will do well not to be discouraged with little accidents, that may arise at first from his want of experience. Being somewhat complex, it requires, as already said, a variety of attentions; habit will render them unnecessary. And the studious man, who is much in his chamber, and has a pleasure in managing his own fire, will soon find this a machine most comfortable and delightful. To others, who leave their fires to the care of ignorant servants, I do not recommend it. They will with difficulty acquire the knowledge necessary, and will make frequent blunders, that will fill your room with smoke. It is therefore by no means fit for common use in families. It may be adviseable to begin with the flaming kind of stone coal, which is large, and, not caking together, is not so apt to clog the grate. After some experience, any kind of coal may be used, and with this advantage, that no smell, even from the most sulphurous kind, can come into your room, the current of air being constantly into the vase, where too that smell is all consumed.

The vase form was chosen as being elegant in itself, and very proper for burning of coals. Where wood is the usual fuel, and must be burned in pieces of some length, a long square chest may be substituted, in which *A* is the cover opening by a hinge behind, *B* the grate, *C* the hearth-box with its divisions as in the other, *D* the plan of the chest, *E* the long narrow grate. Plate, Fig. 17. This I have not tried, but the vase machine was compleated in 1771, and used by me in London three winters, and one afterwards in America,

much to my satisfaction; and I have not yet thought of any improvement it may be capable of, though such may occur to others. For common use, while in France, I have contrived another grate for coals, which has in part the same property of burning the smoke and preserving the red coals longer by the flame, though not so completely as in the vase, yet sufficiently to be very useful, which I shall now describe as follows.

A, is a round grate, one French foot in diameter, and eight inches deep between the bars and the back (Plate, Fig. 18); the sides and back of plate iron; the sides having holes of half an inch diameter, distant three or four inches from each other, to let in air for enlivening the fire. The back without holes. The sides do not meet at top nor at bottom by eight inches: That square is filled by grates of small bars crossing front to let in air below, and let out the smoke or flame above. The three middle bars of the front grate are fixed, the upper and lower may be taken out and put in at pleasure, when hot, with a pair of pincers. This round grate turns upon an axis, supported by the crotchet *B*, the stem of which is an inverted conical tube five inches deep, which comes on as many inches upon a pin that fits it, and which is fixed upright in a cast-iron plate *D*, that lies upon the hearth; in the middle of the top and bottom grates are fixed small upright pieces, *E*, *E*, about an inch high, which, as the whole is turned on its axis, stop it when the grate is perpendicular. Fig. 19 is another view of the same machine.

In making the first fire in a morning with this grate, there is nothing particular to be observed. It is made as in other grates, the coals being put in above, after taking out the upper bar, and replacing it when they are in. The round figure of

the fire, when thoroughly kindled, is agreeable, it represents the great giver of warmth to our system. As it burns down and leaves a vacancy above, which you would fill with fresh coals, the upper bar is to be taken out, and afterwards replaced. The fresh coals, while the grate continues in the same position, will throw up as usual a body of thick smoke. But every one accustomed to coal fires in common grates must have observed, that pieces of fresh coal stuck in below among the red coals have their smoke so heated, as that it becomes flame as fast as it is produced, which flame rises among the coals and enlivens the appearance of the fire. Here then is the use of this swivel grate. By a push with your tongs or poker, you turn it on its pin till it faces the back of the chimney, then turn it over on its axis gently till it again faces the room, whereby all the fresh coals will be found under the live coals, and the greater part of the smoke arising from the fresh coals will, in its passage through the live ones, be heated so as to be converted into flame. Whence you have much more heat from them, and your red coals are longer preserved from consuming. I conceive this construction, though not so complete a consumer of all the smoke as the vase, yet to be fitter for common use, and very advantageous. It gives too a full sight of the fire, always a pleasing object, which we have not in the other. It may with a touch be turned more or less from any one of the company, that desires to have less of its heat, or presented full to one just come out of the cold. And, supported in a horizontal position, a tea kettle may be boiled on it.

The author's description of his Pennsylvania fireplace, first published in 1744, having fallen into the hands of workmen in Europe, who did not, it seems, well comprehend the

principles of that machine, it was much disfigured in their imitations of it; and one of its main intentions, that of admitting a sufficient quantity of fresh air warmed in entering through the air-box, nearly defeated, by a pretended improvement, in lessening its passages to make more room for coals in a grate. On pretence of such improvements, they obtained patents for the invention, and for a while made great profit by the sale, till the public became sensible of that defect in the expected operation. If the same thing should be attempted with this vase stove, it will be well for the buyer to examine thoroughly such pretended improvements, lest, being the mere productions of ignorance, they diminish or defeat the advantages of the machine, and produce inconvenience and disappointment.

The method of burning smoke, by obliging it to descend through hot coals, may be of great use in heating the walls of a hot-house. In the common way, the horizontal passages or flues that are made to go and return in those walls, lose a great deal of their effect when they come to be foul with soot; for a thick blanket-like lining of soot prevents much of the hot air from touching and heating the brick work in its passage, so that more fire must be made as the flue grows fouler. But by burning the smoke they are kept always clean. The same method may also be of great advantage to those businesses, in which large coppers or caldrons are to be heated.

Written at Sea, 1785.

1600. TO JOHN JAY¹

Philadelphia, Sept. 19, 1785.

SIR,

I have the honour to acquaint you, that I left Paris the 12th of July, and, agreeable to the permission of Congress, am returned to my own country. Mr. Jefferson had recovered his health, and was much esteemed and respected there. Our joint letters have already informed you of our late proceedings, to which I have nothing to add, except that the last act I did, as Minister Plenipotentiary for making treaties, was to sign with him, two days before I came away, the treaty of friendship and commerce that had been agreed on with Prussia,² and which was to be carried to the Hague, by Mr. Short, there to be signed by Baron Thulemeyer on the part of the King, who, without the least hesitation, had approved and conceded to the new humane articles proposed by Congress. Mr. Short was also to call at London for the signature of Mr. Adams, who I learned, when at Southampton, was well received at the British court.

The Captain Lamb, who, in a letter of yours to Mr. Adams, was said to be coming to us with instructions respecting Morocco, had not appeared, nor had we heard any thing of him; so nothing had been done by us in that treaty.

I left the court of France in the same friendly disposition towards the United States, that we have all along experienced, though concerned to find, that our credit is not better supported

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. II, p. 425. — ED.

² See this treaty at large in the public *Journals of Congress*, Vol. IV, p. 639. — ED.

in the payment of the interest money due on our loans, which, in case of another war, must be, they think, extremely prejudicial to us, and indeed may contribute to draw on a war the sooner, by affording our enemies the encouraging confidence, that those who take so little care to pay, will not again find it easy to borrow. I received from the King, at my departure, the present of his picture set round with diamonds, usually given to ministers plenipotentiary, who have signed any treaties with that court; and it is at the disposition of Congress, to whom be pleased to present my dutiful respects. I am, with great esteem and regard, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Not caring to trust them to a common conveyance, I send by my late secretary W. Temple Franklin, who will have the honour of delivering them to you, all the original treaties I have been concerned in negotiating, that were completed. Those with Portugal and Denmark continue in suspense.

1601. TO GEORGE WASHINGTON (L. C.)

Philad^a, Sept. 20. 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I am just arrived from a Country, where the Reputation of General Washington runs very high, and where everybody wishes to see him in Person; but, being told that it is not likely he will ever favour them with a Visit, they hope at least for a Sight of his perfect Resemblance by means of their principal Statuary, M. Houdon, whom Mr. Jefferson and myself agreed with to come over for the purpose of taking a Bust, in order to make the intended Statue for the State of Virginia.

He is here, but, the Materials and Instruments he sent down the Seine from Paris not being arrived at Havre when we sailed, he was obliged to leave them, and is now busied in supplying himself here. As soon as that is done, he proposes to wait on you in Virginia, as he understands there is no Prospect of your coming hither, which would indeed make me very happy; as it would give me an Opportunity of congratulating with you personally on the final Success of your long and painful Labours, in the Service of our Country, which have laid us all under eternal Obligations. With the greatest and most sincere Esteem and Respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.¹

1602. TO GOVERNOR WILLIAM GREENE AND
MRS. GREENE (L. C.)

Philad^a, Sept. 20, 1785.

I seize this first Opportunity of acquainting my dear Friends, that I have once more the great Happiness of being at home in my own Country, and with my Family, because I know it will give you Pleasure. I shall be glad to hear of your Welfare, also, and beg you to favour me with a Line, and let me know particularly how my young Friend Ray does.

I enjoy, Thanks to God, as much good Health as can reasonably be expected at my time of life; and am ever, with sincere Esteem, my dear Friends, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ M. Houdon went to Mount Vernon, where he remained three weeks, and modelled a bust of General Washington, as exact in all its lineaments as his skill could make it. From this model was executed the statue of Washington, which was procured by the State of Virginia, and placed in the Capitol at Richmond. See Sparks's "Life of Washington," p. 390.—S.

1603. TO JOHN JAY AND MRS. JAY¹ (P.C.) (L.C.)Philad^a, Sept. 21, 1785.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I received your very kind Letter of the 16th, congratulating me on my safe Arrival with my Grandsons; an Event that indeed makes me very happy, being what I have long ardently wish'd, and, considering the growing Infirmities of Age, began almost to despair of. I am now in the Bosom of my Family, and find four new little Prattlers, who cling about the Knees of their Grandpapa, and afford me great Pleasure. The affectionate Welcome I met with from my Fellow Citizens was far beyond my Expectation.

I bore my Voyage very well, and find myself rather better for it, so that I have every possible Reason to be satisfied with my having undertaken and perform'd it. When I was at Passy, I could not bear a Wheel Carriage; and, being discouraged in my Project of descending the Seine in a Boat, by the Difficulties and tediousness of its Navigation in so dry a Season, I accepted the Offer of one of the King's Litters, carried by large Mules, which brought me well, tho' in walking slowly, to Havre. Thence I went over in a Packet-Boat to Southampton, where I staid four Days, till the ship came for me to Spithead. Several of my London Friends came there to see me, particularly the good Bishop of St. Asaph and Family, who staid with me to the last. In short, I am now so well as to think it possible, that I may once more have the Pleasure of seeing you both perhaps at New York, with

¹ The original letter is in the possession of Mr. Henry E. Pellew, of Washington. An auto. draft is in L. C. — ED.

my dear young Friend (who I hope may not have quite forgotten me). For I imagine, that on the sandy Road between Burlington and Amboy I could bear an easy Coach, and the rest is Water. I rejoice to hear that you continue well, being with true and great Esteem and Affection your most obedient Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1604. TO THOMAS PAINE (L. C.)

Philad^a, Sept 27, 1785.

DEAR SIR: — Your kind Congratulations on my safe Return give me a great deal of Pleasure;¹ for I have always valued your Friendship.

The Ease and Rest you wish me to enjoy for the Remainder of my Days is certainly what is most proper for me, what I long wish'd for, and what I propos'd to myself in resigning my late Employment: But it is what I find I am not likely to obtain: For my Fellow-Citizens having in a considerable Body express'd their Desire that I would still take a Part in their publick Councils, assuring me it was the unanimous Wish of the different Parties that divide the State, from an Opinion that I might find some means of reconciling them, I had not sufficient Firmness to refuse their Request of Permitting their Voting for me as Councillor at the ensuing Election. Tho' I apprehend they expect too much of me, and that without doing the good propos'd, I shall find myself engag'd again in Business more troublesome than I have lately quitted.

As to my Health, of which you kindly desire some Information, it is as well as, at my Age, can reasonably be expected.

¹ In a letter dated September 23, 1785 (A. P. S.). — ED.

I have the Stone indeed, and sometimes the Gout, but the Pain from the Stone is hitherto not very severe, and there are in the World so many worse Maladies to which Human Nature is subject, that I ought to be content with the moderate Share allotted me.

Be assured, my dear Friend, that instead of Repenting that I was your Introducer into America, I value myself on the Share I had in procuring for it the Acquisition of so useful and valuable a Citizen.

I shall be very glad to see you when you happen to be again at Philadelphia, being with sincere Esteem and Affection, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1605. TO FRANCIS CHILDS¹

Philadelphia, October 1, 1785.

SIR:—I thank you for your kind congratulations on my return.² My printing materials, consisting of a great variety of founts, were sent down the Seine some weeks before I left Passy, but were so long in their passage, that when I came to Havre they were not arrived, and I was obliged to come away without them. It was expected that the next packet would be ordered to sail from Havre, in which case I left directions that my packages should all be sent by her to New York. When I hear of their arrival I may possibly come to New York; and then we may treat on the subject you mention.³

¹ A printer at New York. Printed from "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 268. — ED.

² In a letter dated September 26, 1785 (A. P. S.). — ED.

³ Concerning the conditions upon which Franklin had assisted James Parker. — ED.

I have now only to add that I shall be glad of being serviceable to you on reasonable terms, and am your humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1606. TO DONATIEN LE RAY DE CHAUMONT¹

Philadelphia, October 20, 1785.

I make no apology for writing in English, because I know my friend Sophy² can translate it for you.

Immediately after my landing, I wrote to acquaint you with my safe arrival and the absence of your son. He is since returned in good health, and writes to you by this opportunity, of which he acquainted me. I just now received your favour of August 10th, with two for him. They will be put in his hands as soon as he returns from a hunting party, on which he is out at present with my son Bache and some others; but will be back here next Sunday.

I thank you for delivering the table to Madame Le Veillard; but more particularly for the present you have made to Abbé Morellet, at my request, of the doctoral chair.³ He had taken a vast liking to it, and the possession must give him great pleasure. The marmite à vapeur I have with me here. We used it at sea with great success; though the water we boiled was salt.

As to Finck, the maitre d'hotel, he was fairly paid in money

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 271. — ED.

² Sophie de Chaumont, daughter of Le Ray de Chaumont. — ED.

³ Abbé Morellet had always admired Franklin's *fauteuil doctoral*, and his little cabinet with its drawers for nails and carpenters' tools. Upon the chair he inscribed "Benjamin Franklin hic sedebat." The table presented to Madame le Veillard was a tea table. — ED.

for every just demand he could make against us, and we have his receipts in full. But there are knaves in the world whom no writing can bind, and when you think you have finished with them, they come with demands after demands sans fin. He was continually saying of himself, *Je suis honnête homme; je suis honnête homme.* But I always suspected he was mistaken; and so it proves.

I hope your Princess and Princesses and Duchesses and Marquises are not birds of passage, but will stay with you as we did through the winter, so that you may pass it the more agreeably.

I will mention your project for transporting wood, etc., to some of my friends; but I think this is not the best part of the country for such an undertaking.

[B. F.]

1607. TO MADAME HELVÉTIUS (B. N.)

à Philadelphia, ce 20 oct^{re} 1785

Hier etois Mercredi. A dix heures de Matin, j'ai pensé de vous, de votre Maison, de votre Table, de vos Amis, etc. A cette heure, ai je dis, ils sont tous a diner, M. le Roy, M. Hennin, l'Abbés de la Roche & Morellet, M. Cabbanis, peutetre quelques unes des petites Etoiles. Madame sert a toute la Compagnie, avec autant de Facilité que de Plaisir. Mais, hélas, je n'étoit pas la, pour participer les jolis Propos de bon Sens, de l'Esprit, & d'Amitié, avec lesquelles ses Repas sont toujours assaisonnées !

Vous aurez Plaisir de Sçavoir que je suis ici en bon Santé & heureux dans le Sein de ma Famille. Mais j'ai manqué de trouver le Repos que j'esperoit; car on m'a saisis pour

me faire Gouverneur, & j'ai en la Foiblesse de consentir; ainsi me voila aussi occupé que jamais. — Si je peux faire du bien pour mon Peuple, cela me consolera. Autrement, je souhaiterai que j'avois acceptois votre Invitation amicale de passer le reste de mes jours chez vous.

Adieu, ma chere Amie, aimez moi toujours, comme je vous aime. Embrassez pour moi tous mes Amis de votre Cercle, & me croyez toujours attaché a vous avec les Siens de plus forte affection. [B. F.]

1608. TO FERDINAND GRAND¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a. Oct. 20. 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I have written to you twice since my Arrival, but have not yet drawn any Bills on you from hence. Perhaps I may soon draw for the Amount of the Interest that will be due on my Money in the Funds; and I hope soon to hear from you and to receive my Acc^t. Inclos'd I send you a second Bill of M^r Houdon's, for which when receiv'd you will credit me. He is this Evening return'd well from Gen. Washington's, having finish'd his Business there, and is preparing to return directly. —

I have this Day receiv'd several Letters from Passy, dated Aug. 10. but no Line from you, I suppose you did not hear of the Opportunity. My eldest Grandson is at New York, the other, Benjamin, joins in Respects & best Wishes for you & yours, with

Dear Sir,

Your most obed^t

& most humble Serv^t

B FRANKLIN

¹ From the private collection of Mr. E. B. Holden. — Ed.

1609. TO DAVID HARTLEY¹

Philadelphia, October 27, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I received at Havre de Grace 6 copies of your print, which I have brought with me hither. I shall frame and keep one of them in my best room. I shall send one to Mr. Jay, and give the others among some friends who esteem and respect you as we do.

Your newspapers are filled with accounts of distresses and miseries, that these States are plunged into since their separation from Britain. You may believe me when I tell you, that there is no truth in those accounts. I find all property in lands and houses augmented vastly in value; that of houses in towns at least fourfold. The crops have been plentiful, and yet the produce sells high, to the great profit of the farmer. At the same time, all imported goods sell at low rates, some cheaper than the first cost. Working people have plenty of employ and high pay for their labour.

These appear to me as certain signs of public prosperity. Some traders, indeed, complain that trade is dead; but this pretended evil is not an effect of inability in the people to buy, pay for, and consume the usual articles of commerce, as far as they have occasion for them; it is owing merely to there being too many traders, who have crowded hither from all parts of Europe with more goods than the natural demand of the country requires. And what in Europe is called the debt of America, is chiefly the debt of these adventurers and super-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 197. — ED.

cargoes to their principals, with which the settled inhabitants of America, who never paid better for what they want and buy, have nothing to do. As to the contentment of the inhabitants with the change of government, methinks a stronger proof cannot be desired, than what they have given in my reception. You know the part I had in that change, and you see in the papers the addresses from all ranks with which your friend was welcomed home, and the sentiments they contain confirmed yesterday in the choice of him for President by the Council and new Assembly, which was unanimous, a single voice in seventy-seven excepted.

I remember you used to wish for newspapers from America. Herewith I send a few, and you shall be regularly supplied, if you can put me in a way of sending them, so as that you may not be obliged to pay postage. With unchangeable esteem and respect I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1610. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a, Oct. 30, 1785.

I received my dear Friend's Letter of July 23, at Southampton, where I arrived the 24th, and staid till the 28th. I believe I acquainted you by a Line, immediately after my Arrival here, that we had a pleasant, and not a long Passage, in which there was but one Day, a Day of violent Storm, in which I was glad you were not with us. I had the Happiness of finding my family well, and of being very kindly received by my Country folks.

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. — ED.

I say nothing to persuade your Coming, because I said in a former Letter, I would leave you entirely to your own Judgment, which is very good. I would only mention a Fact, that, on Enquiry I am inform'd the usual Apprentice-Fee given to a Mercantile House of Eminence, is from 100 to £150 Sterling. I am plung'd again into public Business, as deep as ever; and can now only add my Love to the dear Children, in which this Family all join. Temple is just gone to look at his Lands, and Ben is at College to compleat his Studies. I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1611. TO SAMUEL ELBERT¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a, Nov. 5, 1785.

SIR,

I had the honour formerly of serving the Province of Georgia as their Agent in England, being appointed by Acts of the Assembly, with a Salary of One hundred Pounds per Annum. On my return to America I left my Account with my Successor; and the Troubles coming on I have ever since been so fully occupied in the Public Affairs of the United States either here or abroad, that the obtaining a Settlement of that Account has been omitted. Inclosed is a copy of it, which I request your Excellency would be so good as to lay before your Assembly, who will, I make no doubt, in

¹ From the private collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. S. Elbert (1743-1788) was elected governor of Georgia in 1785, succeeding John Houston. He had been a soldier in the Revolution, was present at the surrender of Cornwallis, and received the brevet of brigadier-general, November 3, 1783.—ED.

adjusting it, consider equitably the long Delay and expedite the Payment.

With great Respect I have the honour to be, Sir,

B. FRANKLIN

1612. TO MESSRS. SEARS AND SMITH¹ (A. P. S.)

Philad^a. Nov. 14. 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

I receiv'd your Letter of the 13th past. Sometime last Summer the Marquis de la Fayette wrote to me about your Affair, and finding by a Letter from you that you had not receiv'd my Answer of Aug. 4. 1784 to yours of May 18, I sent him a Copy of that Answer to be forwarded by him to you, and I wonder you have not yet received it. Since the Receipt of yours of the 13th past, I have endeavoured to find among my Papers, disordered by Removal, another Copy of the same Answer: which I could not meet with till yesterday. I now enclose it, and am, with great Regard,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN

¹ A business house in New York. They had written to Franklin May 18, 1784 (A. P. S.), and repeated their appeal October 13, 1785 (A. P. S.), informing him that they had engaged in a voyage to the coast of Africa to barter their cargo for gold and ivory. Contrary to expectations the captain of the vessel took a cargo of slaves who were carried to Martinico and sold. The revenue officers of Martinique required a heavy duty upon the slaves; Sears & Smith begged Franklin to use his influence to have the affair settled so as to prevent the payment of so heavy a duty. — ED.

1613. TO JOHN BARD AND MRS. BARD¹

DEAR FRIENDS,

Philadelphia, November 14, 1785.

I received your kind letter, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of your welfare. Your friendly congratulations are very obliging. I had on my return some right, as you observe, to expect repose; and it was my intention to avoid all public business. But I had not firmness enough to resist the unanimous desire of my country folks; and I find myself harnessed again in their service for another year. They engrossed the prime of my life. They have eaten my flesh, and seem resolved now to pick my bones. You are right in supposing, that I interest myself in every thing that affects you and yours, sympathizing in your afflictions, and rejoicing in your felicities; for our friendship is ancient, and was never obscured by the least cloud.

I thank you for your civilities to my grandson, and am ever, with sincere and great esteem and regard, my dear friends,
yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1614. TO CHARLES-JOSEPH MATHON DE LA
COUR²

SIR,

Philadelphia, November 18, 1785.

I received duly the letter you did me the honour of writing to me on the 25th of June past,³ together with the collection

¹ From Sparks, Vol. X, p. 239. — ED.

² Mathon de la Cour (1738–1793), a native of Lyons, son of an eminent mathematician of that city, was famous not only for his writings, but for his numerous philanthropic projects and foundations. — ED.

³ No letter of this date exists, but there is one dated June 30, 1785, in

you have made *des comptes rendus de vos contrôleurs généraux*; and your *Discours sur les Moyens d'encourager le Patriotisme dans les Monarchies*. The first is a valuable work, as containing a great deal of useful information; but the second I am particularly charmed with, the sentiments being delightfully just, and expressed with such force and clearness, that I am persuaded the pamphlet, though small, must have a great effect on the minds of both princes and people, and thence be productive of much good to mankind. Be pleased to accept my hearty thanks for both.

It is right to be sowing good seed whenever we have an opportunity, since some of it may be productive. An instance of this you should be acquainted with, as it may afford you pleasure. The reading of *Fortuné Ricard's Testament*, has put it into the head and heart of a citizen to leave two thousand pounds sterling to two American cities, who are to lend it in small sums at five per cent to young beginners in business; and the accumulation, after a hundred years, to be laid out in public works of benefit to those cities.¹ With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1615. TO GEORGE CLINTON² (P. C.)

Philadelphia Jan. 1st 1786
In Council

SIR

Intelligence has been received here, that Ethan Allen from Vermont, and one Solomon Strong of your State have lately

A. P. S., thanking Franklin for having accepted membership in the *Academie des Sciences, Belles Lettres et Arts de Lyon*. — ED.

¹ It is to his own will that Franklin refers. — ED.

² From the private collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. George Clinton (1739–1812) was governor of New York (1777–1795). — ED.

been among the Settlers at Wyoming, persuading them to join in erecting a new State to be compos'd of those Settlements, those on the West Branch of Susquehanah, and a Part of the State of New York promising the Assistance of an armed Force from Vermont besides what may be obtain'd from the Company in Connecticut where they are now both gone to forward the Project.

Chimerical as it appears, and unlikely to succeed we thought it nevertheless right to acquaint your Excellency with it, that such Enquiries may be made and Measures taken as you may judge proper to prevent these restless Spirits from exciting Disturbances that may divert the People's Attention from their Industry, and be attended with mischievous Consequences.

With great Respect I have the Honour to be, etc.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

1616. TO JAMES BOWDOIN¹ (L. C.)

Philad., Jan. 1, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It gave me great Pleasure, my dear Friend, to receive your kind Letter of Congratulation, as it prov'd, that all my old Friends in Boston were not estranged from me by the malevolent Misrepresentations of my Conduct, that had been circulated there, but that one of the most esteemed still retained a Regard for me. Indeed, you are now almost the only one left me by nature; Death having, since we were last together, depriv'd me of my dear Cooper, Winthrop, and Quincy.

¹ Printed from a draft in L. C. The original letter is at Bowdoin College.
—ED.

I have not receiv'd the Letter you mention to have sent me with some Memoirs, under Cover to Dr. Price. I must have left Europe before they got to his Hands; but he will doubtless send them to me by the first convenient Opportunity. It was not necessary to make any Apology for the Liberty you say you have taken in those Memoirs, in making observations on my *Queries* upon Light, for I am sure they will help me to understand it better, and that must make them agreeable to me. I shall be glad to see the whole Volume,¹ which you are so kind as to promise me; and I hope in the course of a few Months to be able to make Returns, in a second Volume of our Memoirs,² now in the Press.

I sent to you some weeks since, by Mr. Gerry,³ Dr. Jeffries's Account of his Aërial Voyage from England to France, which I receiv'd from him just before I left that Country. In his Letter, that came with it, he requests I would not suffer it to be printed, because a copy of it had been put into the Hands of Sir Joseph Banks for the Royal Society, and was to be read there in November. If they should not think fit to publish it, as I apprehend may be the Case, they having hitherto avoided meddling with the Subject of Balloons, I shall be glad to have the Manus^t return'd to me. In the mean time, I thought it might afford some Amusement to you and to your Society.⁴ My Acquaintance with Dr. Jeffries began by his

¹ First volume of the Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. — ED.

² Transactions of The American Philosophical Society. — ED.

³ Elbridge Gerry (1744-1814), delegate to the Continental Congress (1776). He vacated his seat in Congress in 1780, but was recalled in 1783. — ED.

⁴ The paper was printed in London, entitled, "A Narrative of two Aërial Voyages," 4to, 1786. — ED.

bringing me a Letter in France, the first thro' the Air, from England.

With best Wishes of many happy New Years to you, and good Madam Bowdoin, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1617. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a Jan. 19, 1786.

DEAR JONATHAN

I received your kind Letter of the 26th past, and am glad to hear that your Affairs are likely to turn out as well as you expected, and that you have made the Soap which I wanted for some Friends in France and thereby acquir'd the Knowledge of that Art. It will not be proper to present that nautical Piece to your Academy it being already in possession of the Philosophical Society here who have ordered it to be printed in their Memoirs and it is now in the Press. It may however be read there if you think it will be agreable; only I would have the Part struck out relating to the expediting and retarding the Voyages between N. America and England by the Diurnal Motion, being on Consideration convinc'd that its Effect is equal both ways. But I will perhaps by next Post, send you some other Papers that you may present if you and my Friend Mr. Bowdoin should judge them not improper. I am much oblig'd by his sending that Acc^t of a Dissolvent for the Stone, and request you to thank him in my Behalf. I wish the Discovery you mention of freshening Salt Water may prove as real as it would be useful. I forwarded Dr.

¹ From the original in the possession of Mr. Louis A. Biddle. — ED.

Jeffries's Memoir some Weeks since to Mr. Bowdoin by Mr. Gerry.

My love to your Father and Mother, and Brother and Sister.
I am ever

Your affectionate Uncle

B. FRANKLIN.

now past 80.

1618. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Jan. 27, 1786

DEAR JONATHAN: — Your Bill for £47..10..0.. has been presented and accepted.

In my last of Jan. 19, I promis'd to send you some philosophical Papers, which I now enclose. The three Pieces I wrote at Sea will all be printed in our Transactions here; that on Chimneys is already done, and perhaps I may send you the Sheets with this. The others will be done soon; and printed Copies will be better for you than written ones by Ben.

I wonder with you that the Books are not arriv'd. Pray write and enquire about them.

When I put Dr. Jeffries's Memoir into the hands of Mr. Gerry, I fancy'd he was going to Boston, or as a Member of Congress would send it free of Postage. But I see by the Newspapers that he stays at New York to be married,¹ and perhaps that important Transaction has put the Packet out of his Mind.

I am ever your affectionate Uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ He married Anne, daughter of Charles Thomson. — ED.

1619. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad. Jan. 29, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I have lately drawn on you the following Bills,
viz.

In favour of Theodore Hopkins for 200 £ Sterling
of Mess^{rs} Roy [?] & Freres for 3110 Livres
tourn^s

of Mess^{rs} Lea & Obrien 500 £ Sterling

The Bills for Sterling Money are made payable in London. You will accept to pay them there accordingly, and whatever Expen^{ce} is occasion'd by it will be charg'd to me. I shall draw no more at present, having no farther Occasion for Money here, as the high Price of Labour discourages my Project of Building, till it shall be more moderate. I wish much to hear from you, and to receive my Account to the End of last Year. I hope the good Family continue well. We are all so here, and my Grandsons join in Love, &c Notwithstanding what you may see in the English Newspapers, be assured that America is in a most prosperous Situation. My own Estate I find more than tripled in Value since the Revolution. I hear nothing yet of our Baggage which was in the Hands of M^r Limousin at Havre and wish you would enquire about it, and inform me if you can what is become of it; I have not receiv'd a Line from him since I left France. Please to remember me affectionately to all our Friends at Passy and Auteuil, &c &c With great and sincere Esteem, I am my dear Friend,

Ever yours,

B FRANKLIN.

1620. *Description of an Instrument for taking down Books from high Shelves*¹

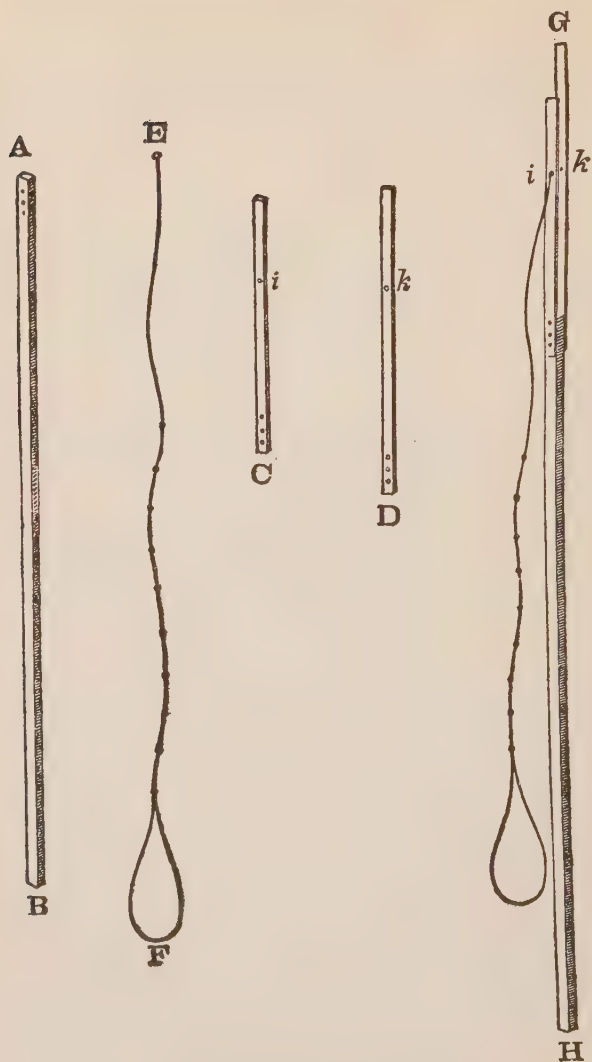
January, 1786.

OLD men find it inconvenient to mount a ladder or steps for that purpose, their heads being sometimes subject to giddinesses, and their activity, with the steadiness of their joints, being abated by age; besides the trouble of removing the steps every time a book is wanted from a different part of their library.

For a remedy, I have lately made the following simple machine, which I call the *Long Arm*.

A B, the *Arm*, is a stick of pine, an inch square and 8 feet long. *C, D*, the *Thumb* and *Finger*, are two pieces of ash lath, an inch and half wide, and a quarter of an inch thick. These are fixed by wood screws on opposite sides of the end *A* of the arm *A B*; the finger *D* being longer and standing out an inch and half farther than the thumb *C*. The outside of the ends of these laths are pared off sloping and thin, that they may more easily enter between books that stand together on a shelf. Two small holes are bored through them at *i, k*. *E F*, the sinew, is a cord of the size of a small goosequill, with a loop at one end. When applied to the machine it passes through the two laths, and is stopped by a knot in its other end behind the longest at *k*. The hole at *i* is nearer the end of the arm than that at *k*, about an inch. A number

¹ This article was first published by Sparks. See "The Works of Benjamin Franklin," Vol. VI, p. 562. The Ms. was sent by Franklin to Jonathan Williams to be communicated to James Bowdoin. See letter to Williams, February 12, 1786. — ED.



of knots are also on the cord, distant three or four inches from each other.

To use this instrument; put one hand into the loop, and draw the sinew straight down the side of the arm; then enter the end of the finger between the book you would take down and that which is next to it. The laths being flexible, you may easily by a slight pressure sideways open them wider if the book is thick, or close them if it is thin by pulling the string, so as to enter the shorter lath or thumb between your book and that which is next to its other side, then push till the back of your book comes to touch the string. Then draw the string or sinew tight, which will cause the thumb and finger to pinch the book strongly, so that you may draw it out. As it leaves the other books, turn the instrument a *quarter* round, so that the book may lie flat and rest on its side upon the under lath or finger. The knots on the sinew will help you to keep it tight and close to the side of the arm as you take it down hand over hand, till the book comes to you; which would drop from between the thumb and finger if the sinew was let loose.

All new tools require some practice before we can become expert in the use of them. This requires very little.

Made in the proportions above given, it serves well for books in duodecimo or octavo. Quartos and folios are too heavy for it; but those are usually placed on the lower shelves within reach of hand.

The book taken down, may, when done with, be put up again into its place by the same machine.

1621. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (P. C.)Philad^a Feb. 12. 1786

DEAR JONATHAN

I wrote to you a few Days since, and sent you 4 philosophical Papers which I permitted your communicating to Mr. Bowdoin. As they are chiefly speculative and hypothetical and (except the Description of the long Arm a new Instrument for taking down Books from high Shelves) contain little of practical Utility.

I apprehend he will not think them worth laying before the Society. I sent the Pacquet by Mrs. Allen whom you may remember to have seen in France. So you will receive them free of Postage, tho' a little later, for I cannot frank as you suppose, and I pay for all Letters that come to me, except those from the Secretaries of Congress. I thank you however for your Pacquet containing your Dispute with Mercator in which I think you have the Advantage both in Temper and Strength of Argument. It seems to me that instead of discussing *When* we ceas'd to be British Subjects you should have deny'd our *ever having been such*. We were Subjects to the King of G. Britain, as were also the Irish, the Jersey and Guernsey People and the Hanoverians, but we were American Subjects as they were Irish, Jersey and Hanoverian Subjects. None are British Subjects but those under the Parliament of Britain.

Your affectionate Uncle

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ From the original in the possession of Mr. Louis A. Biddle. — ED.

1622. TO JONATHAN WILLIAMS¹ (P. C.)
(L. C.)

Philad^a Feb. 16 1786

DEAR JONATHAN:— I have written twice to you lately, but am oblig'd to trouble you with another Line, to request from you a Copy of the Account you took during our last Voyage of the Temperature of the Water, for I cannot find that I have such a Copy, and I want it to add to my nautical Letter now in the Press; so that I wish you to favour me with it as speedily as possible.

And now I am writing, it comes into my Mind to enquire of you what Light you find me to stand in among my Country folks? My late Friends Dr. Cooper and Mr. Quincy gave me Friendly Notices of the Calumnies propagated against me, which appeared all to emanate from the Brantry Focus. If they still exist, I would furnish you with a Copy of my Justification, which I sent to Dr. Cooper, but it probably did not reach Boston before his Death. You see, that old as I am, I am not yet grown insensible with respect to Reputation; tho' as I may possibly never be able again to visit Boston, how much soever I may wish to do it, and sometimes resolve upon it, my Character there is of somewhat less Importance.

How has my poor old Sister gone thro' the Winter? Tell me frankly whether she lives comfortably, or is pinched? For I am afraid she is too cautious of acquainting me with all her Difficulties, tho' I am always ready and willing to relieve her when I am acquainted with them.

My Love to your Parents and the rest of the Family,

¹ From the original in the possession of Mr. Louis A. Biddle. A draft exists in L. C. — ED.

and to our young Fellow Traveller, who I hope will make a fine Man. I am ever, Yours Affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1623. TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Feb. 24th, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received lately your kind letter of Nov. 27th.¹ My Reception here was, as you have heard, very honourable indeed; but I was betray'd by it, and by some Remains of Ambition, from which I had imagined myself free, to accept of the Chair of Government for the State of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was Repose and a private Life. I hope, however, to be able to bear the Fatigue for one Year, and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little Opportunity for Conversation when we last met.² You could have given me Informations and Counsels that I wanted, but we were scarce a Minute together without being broke in upon. I am to thank you, however, for the Pleasure I had after our Parting, in reading the new Book³ you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good; tho' the Reading Time of most People is of late so taken up with News Papers and little periodical Pamphlets, that few now-a-days venture to attempt reading a Quarto Volume. I have admir'd to see, that, in the last Century, a Folio, *Burton on Melancholly*,

¹ In A. P. S. — Ed.

² At Southampton, previous to Dr. Franklin's embarking for the United States. — W. T. F.

³ Paley's "Moral Philosophy." — W. T. F.

went through Six Editions in about Twenty Years. We have, I believe, more Readers now, but not of such large Books.

You seem desirous of knowing what Progress we make here in improving our Governments. We are, I think, in the right Road of Improvement, for we are making Experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the Multitude are more effectually set right by Experience, than kept from going wrong by Reasoning with them. And I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining in a few Years as much public Felicity, as good Government is capable of affording.

Your NewsPapers are fill'd with fictitious Accounts of Anarchy, Confusion, Distresses, and Miseries, we are suppos'd to be involv'd in, as Consequences of the Revolution; and the few remaining Friends of the old Government among us take pains to magnify every little Inconvenience a Change in the Course of Commerce may have occasion'd. To obviate the Complaints they endeavour to excite, was written the enclos'd little Piece,¹ from which you may form a truer Idea of our Situation, than your own public Prints would give you. And I can assure you, that the great Body of our Nation find themselves happy in the Change, and have not the smallest Inclination to return to the Domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger Proof of the general Approbation of the Measures, that promoted the Change, and of the Change itself, than has been given by the Assembly and Council of this State, in the nearly unanimous Choice for their Governor, of one who had been so much concern'd in those Measures; the Assembly being themselves the unbrib'd Choice of the

¹ Probably the piece entitled, "The Retort Courteous." — ED.

People, and therefore may be truly suppos'd of the same Sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because, of between 70 and 80 Votes, there were only my own and one other in the negative.

As to my Domestic Circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my Offspring, a Dutiful and Affectionate Daughter in my House, with Six Grandchildren, the eldest of which you have seen, who is now at a College in the next Street, finishing the learned Part of his Education; the others promising, both for Parts and good Dispositions. What their Conduct may be, when they grow up and enter the important Scenes of Life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present Hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large Family does, indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader Mark for Sorrow*; but then he stands a broader Mark for Pleasure too. When we launch our little Fleet of Barques into the Ocean, bound to different Ports, we hope for each a prosperous Voyage; but contrary Winds, hidden Shoals, Storms, and Enemies come in for a Share in the Disposition of Events; and though these occasion a Mixture of Disappointment, yet, considering the Risque where we can make no Insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with Success. My Son's Son, Temple Franklin, whom you have also seen, having had a fine Farm of 600 Acres ¹ convey'd to him by his Father when we were at Southampton, has drop'd for the present his Views of acting in the political Line, and applies himself ardently to the Study and Practice of Agriculture.

¹ At Rancocas, New Jersey. — ED.

This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and therefore the noblest of Employments. His Lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about 16 Miles from this City. He has associated to himself a very skillful English Farmer lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the Business, and partakes for a Term of the Profits; so that there is a great apparent Probability of their Success.

You will kindly expect a Word or two concerning myself. My Health and Spirits continue, Thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had, does not grow worse, and is tolerable. I still have Enjoyment in the Company of my Friends; and, being easy in my Circumstances, have many Reasons to like Living. But the Course of Nature must soon put a period to my present Mode of Existence. This I shall submit to with less Regret, as, having seen during a long Life a good deal of this World, I feel a growing Curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can chearfully, with filial Confidence, resign my Spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of Mankind, who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my Birth to the present Hour. Wherever I am, I hope always to retain the pleasing remembrance of your Friendship, being with sincere and great Esteem, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. We all join in Respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable Family.

1624. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad^a March 5, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND:— Since my last, which was of Jan. 29, I have had the great Pleasure of receiving yours of Oct. 10, '85, by which I learnt that yourself and the good Family continu'd well. The Vessel from Havre, after a long Passage of about 12 Weeks, arrived at last with all my Things in pretty good Order, and sundry Parcels of Books, etc., from you: when I had almost given over all Hopes of seeing them ever again: So that I now find myself happily situated in my own House, surrounded by my Offspring, with all my Playthings and Amusements about me, and my Malady not augmented, but still continuing tolerable.

I have drawn upon you lately for 1,754 L. tournois, in favour of Ross and Vaughan. My former Drafts since my Arrival here were for £200 sterling, 3,110 livres tournois, and £500 sterling. I hope now to receive soon your Account completing the last Year, and that you have been paid my Dividend on my Stock in the Funds.

I suppose my Grandson will write to you by this Conveyance, tho' he is now very busy in preparing to settle on his Farm, which is a very good one, about 16 Miles from this Town, Water Carriage to his Door, very convenient for bringing his Produce to Market. Benjamin is at College, and applies close to his Studies. He presents his Respects.

I rejoice to hear that the Emperor and the Dutch have accommodated their Differences. Long may the Peace of Europe continue! For I am of Opinion that there never

was a bad Peace, nor a good War. And I think your Minister, who is so expert in composing Quarrels and preventing Wars, the great Blessing of this Age. The Devil must send us three or four Heroes, before he can get as much Slaughter of Mankind done as that one Man has prevented.

I do not understand how Caliastro was involved in the Affair of the Cardinal,¹ and have some Curiosity to know his History when it shall be develop'd.

The English Papers, not only sent me gratis, as you observe, to Algiers,² but they are sending all the United States to Destruction: By their Accounts you would think we were in the utmost Distress, in Want of everything, all in Confusion, no Government, and wishing again for that of England. Be assured, my Friend, that these are all Fictions, mere English Wishes, not American Realities. There are some few Faults in our Constitutions, which is no wonder, considering the stormy Season in which they were made, but those will soon be corrected. And for the rest, I never saw greater and more indubitable Marks of public Prosperity in any Country. The Produce of our Agriculture bears a good Price, and is all paid for in ready hard Money, all the labouring People have high Wages, everybody is well cloth'd and well lodg'd, the Poor provided for or assisted, and all Estates in Town and Country much increased in Value. As to wishing for the English Government, we should as soon wish for that of Morocco.

Be so good as to forward the Letters you will receive here-

¹ The affair of Cagliostro, Cardinal Rohan, and the diamond necklace. — ED.

² It was reported in the English newspapers that on his way back to America Franklin had been captured by Algerine pirates and sold to slavery. — ED.

with, and charge me with the Expence. My Love to all the good Family, and believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1625. TO BENJAMIN RUSH¹

Philadelphia, March, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

During our long acquaintance, you have shown many instances of your regard for me; yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that, if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *Moral Sense*, you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press. Confiding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.²

¹ From Sparks, Vol. X, p. 255. — ED.

² Dr. Rush replied to this letter as follows: "Agreeably to your request, I have suppressed the conclusion of my oration, but I cannot bear to think of sending it out of our State or to Europe without connecting it with your name. I have therefore taken the liberty of inscribing it to you by a simple dedication, of which the enclosed is a copy. And, as you have never in the course of our long acquaintance refused *me* a single favour, I must earnestly insist upon your adding to my great and numerous obligations to you the permission which I now solicit, to send my *last* as I did my *first* publication into the world under the patronage of your name." — *March 11th, 1786.*

The discourse here alluded to, *On the Influence of Physical Causes on the Moral Faculty*, was delivered before The American Philosophical Society, February 27th, 1786, and published soon afterwards. It contained the following dedication: —

1626. TO M. LE VEILLARD¹

Philadelphia, March 16, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received and read with great pleasure your kind letter of October 9th.² It informed me of your welfare, and that of the best of good women, and of her amiable daughter, who I think will tread in her steps. My effects came all in the same ship, in good order; and we are now drinking every day *les eaux épurées de Passy* with great satisfaction, as they kept well, and seem to be rendered more agreeable by the long voyage.

I am here in the bosom of my family, and am not only happy myself, but have the felicity of seeing my country so. Be assured, that all the stories spread in the English papers of our distresses, and confusions, and discontents with our new governments, are as chimerical as the history of my being in chains at Algiers. They exist only in the wishes of our enemies. America never was in higher prosperity, her produce abundant and bearing a good price, her working

To
His Excellency
Benjamin Franklin Esq^r
President
of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania
The friend & benefactor of mankind
the following Oration
is inscribed by
his grateful friend & humble Servant
the Author. — ED.

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 204. Dated by W. T. Franklin March 16, and by Duane, March 6. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

people all employed and well paid, and all property in lands and houses of more than treble the value it bore before the war; and, our commerce being no longer the monopoly of British merchants, we are furnished with all the foreign commodities we need, at much more reasonable rates than heretofore. So that we have no doubt of being able to discharge more speedily the debt incurred by the war, than at first was apprehended.

Our modes of collecting taxes are indeed as yet imperfect, and we have need of more skill in financiering; but we improve in that kind of knowledge daily by experience. That our people are contented with the Revolution, with their new constitutions, and their foreign connexions, nothing can afford a stronger proof, than the universally cordial and joyous reception with which they welcomed the return of one, that was supposed to have had a considerable share in promoting them. All this is in answer to that part of your letter, in which you seem to have been too much impressed with some of the ideas, which those lying English papers endeavour to inculcate concerning us.

I am astonished by what you write concerning the *Prince Evêque*.¹ If the charges against him are made good, it will be another instance of the truth of those proverbs which teach us, that *Prodigality begets necessity*, that *Without economy no revenue is sufficient*, and that *It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright*.

I am glad to hear of the marriage of Mademoiselle Brillon;²

¹ Cardinal Rohan, Evêque de Strasbourg. Le Veillard had written an account of the theft of the diamond necklace. — ED.

² She married (September 20, 1785) M. Vidal de Malachel, son of a secretary of the king and who was "conseiller de la Cour des Aides." — ED.

for every thing, that may contribute to the happiness of that beloved family, gives me pleasure. Be pleased to offer them my felicitations, and assure them of my best wishes.

Will you also be so good as to present my respectful compliments to Madame la Duchesse d'Enville, and to M. le Duc de la Rochefoucauld? You may communicate the political part of this letter to that excellent man. His good heart will rejoice to hear of the welfare of America.

I made no progress when at sea in the history you mention;¹ but I was not idle there, having written three pieces, each of some length; one on Nautical matters, another on Chimneys; and a third a Description of my Vase for consuming smoke, with directions for using it. These are all now printing in the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, of which I hope soon to send you a copy.

My grandsons present their compliments. The eldest is very busy in preparing for a country life, being to enter upon his farm the 25th instant. It consists of about six hundred acres, bounding on navigable water, sixteen miles from Philadelphia. The youngest is at College, very diligent in his studies. You know my situation, involved in public cares; but they cannot make me forget, that you and I love one another, and that I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1627. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad^a March 20, 1786

DEAR FRIEND, I wrote to you on the 5th Instant, and the Vessel not being yet gone, I add a few Lines to give you a

¹ Memoirs of his own life. — ED.

little Trouble in requesting you to receive and divide among some of my Friends a few Hams (jambons) and some Cakes of our Soap. The Hams are in a Cask, and have Labels to denote who are [sic] they are for. I send them, because Strangers here admire them for their good Taste and the Sweetness of their Fat, which is all made by their Feeding on Maize, and I hope they will come good to hand. The Soap is thought to be the best in the World, for Shaving & for washing Chinces, [sic] and other things of delicate Colours. Please to divide them as follows:

Cakes		Cakes	
For Mad . Grand . . .	2	M. Cabbanis	1
Sir Geo. Grand . . .	2	M. Le Roy	1
Yourself	3	M. Roger at McSorin's	1
M. Le Veillard . . .	2	M. Dailly	1
M. Brillon	2	M. Bougon	1
M. de Chaumont . . .	2	Abbé Chalut	1
Mad . Helvetius . . .	2	M. Chalut	1
Abbé de La Roche . .	1	Abbé Arnaud	1
Abbé Morellet	1	Mon Epouse	1
17		9	
		17	
		26	

This kind of Soap is not made for Sale in this Country at present, and perhaps I may not be able to procure any more of it.

I must also request you to purchase & send me M. de La Lande's "History of All the Navigable Canals in the World." It is said to be in Folio with Plates.

I wish to you and yours all Sorts of Felicity, being ever my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

Don't forget to charge me with the Expences I put you to for Carriage, Postage, etc.

1628. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON (L. C.)

Philad^a March 20, 1786.

SIR:—I received your Favour of Oct. 5¹ by Messrs. Fitzhughs, with the Letters and Pacquets you were so kind as to forward to me by those Gentlemen, who have winter'd with us, and are but lately set out for Virginia. I will read du Plessis's Papers as soon as I can find a little time, and say something of them in a future Letter.

As to public Affairs, the Congress has not been able to assemble more than 7 or 8 States during the whole Winter, so the Treaty with P. remains still unratified, tho' there is no doubt of its being done so, as a full Congress is expected next Month. The Disposition to furnish Congress with ample Powers augments daily, as People become more enlightened, and I do not remember ever to have seen during my long Life more Signs of Public Felicity than appear at present throughout these States; the Cultivators of the Earth who make the Bulk of our Nation having had good Crops, which are paid for at high Prices with ready Money, the Artisans too receive high Wages, and the Value of all real Estate is augmented greatly. Merchants and Shopkeepers, indeed,

¹ In L. C.—ED.

complain that there is not Business enough, but this is evidently not owing to the Fewness of Buyers, but to the too great Number of Sellers, for the Consumption of Goods was never greater, as appears by the Dress, Furniture, and Manner of Living of all Ranks of the People.

As to myself, I am, agreeable to your kind Wishes, happy in the Bosom of my Friends and Family, enjoying as good Health as ever, the Stone excepted, which does not grow worse: Be pleased to present my affectionate Respects to the good Countess d'Houdetot, who, you say, does me the Honour to enquire concerning me, and I pray you to assure all other enquiring Friends that I retain, and shall ever retain, the deepest Impression of their many Kindnesses to me while I resided among them. I hope your Health is fully established. My best Wishes attend you, being with great and sincere Esteem, Dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1629. TO DANIEL ROBERDEAU¹ (L. C.)

Philadelphia, March 23, 1786

DEAR SIR: — I received your Favour proposing to sell me your Plantation in this Country,² which I should have answer'd sooner if I could sooner have been informed of its

¹ Daniel Roberdeau (1727–1795) was born in the island of St. Christopher, W.I., came in youth to Philadelphia, where he engaged in business. He served in the Revolutionary army and upon the Council of Safety. He was first brigadier-general of the Pennsylvanian troops. — ED.

² A farm eight or nine miles from Philadelphia. Roberdeau offered it for sale because of his removal to Alexandria. His letter is dated February 4, 1786. (A. P. S.) — ED.

Qualities; Quantity of Acres; Price, and the Rent it affords; for not being in a condition to enjoy a Country Seat since my Malady, the Stone, does not permit me to ride either on Horseback or in a Wheel Carriage, I have no Inducement to purchase Land but the Prospect of its producing greater Profit than Money at Interest. It is but the other day that the Gentleman ³ you referr'd me to, call'd to give me what Information he could, which having consider'd I apprehend the Purchase will not suit my Views, so that I must wish you a better Chapman.

With great Esteem, I have the honour to be, Dear Sir,
your most obed^t and most humble Servant.

B. FRANKLIN.

1630. TO JEAN-BAPTISTE LE ROY (L. C.)

Philad^a. March 27, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I did myself the Pleasure of Writing to you soon after my Arrival here. I hope you & yours continue well, tho' I have not heard from you since I left France: a Country I most sincerely love, having receiv'd in it so many Kindnesses, many of them from you, of which I shall ever retain a grateful Remembrance.

I employ'd my Leisure at Sea in writing three Pieces; one is a Discourse on the different kinds of Smoky Chimneys, & the Means of curing them. Another is, the Description of my Vase Stove, its Principles, Use and Advantages; this I had promis'd to M^r Cadet j^r. The third is a Letter on Nautical Subjects, address'd to your Brother. They are all

¹ A Mr. Bowie. — ED.

now printing in the second Volume of the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, of which I hope to send a Copy to the Academy this Summer, the Printing being far advanced.

The enclos'd for Mad^e LeRoy came to me under Cover from Mad^e Beniousky, who is now in the neighbouring Province of Maryland, to my great Surprise, not being able to imagine how she came there, or what she does there.

If you should have any thing to send to me, such as the Memoires of the Academy, or any new Pamphlet of the kind you know I like; please to give it to M. Grand, who will pay for me the Expence. I send to his Care for you a Catalogue of our Forest Trees and Shrubs just published here, with a spare Copy or two for any Friend of the Academy to whom it may be agreeable.

My Grandsons are well, and join with me in best Wishes of every kind of Happiness to you and good Mad^e le Roy. Pray remember me to M. Bailly & all our Friends of the Commission; and believe me ever, with sincere Esteem and unalterable Attachment, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

I have sent you also
2 Cakes of our fine Soap
made of Myrtle Wax

1631. TO ABBÉ DE LA ROCHE (L. C.)

Philad^a April, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I confess that I am a little [mutilated] as a Correspondent. I wish to hear from my Friends by every Pacquet, and presume they may excuse me if I write

once a Year. The only Apology I can make, and that not a very good one, is, that Indolence is natural to Age, and that I am too much engag'd in Business. But I have too long omitted Writing to my Friends at Auteuil. I throw myself on their Good Nature and beg their Forgiveness. The continued Kindness towards me express'd in their Letters affected me much, and I never perused those Letters but with fresh Pleasure mix'd with the Remembrance of the many delighted Hours I pass'd in that sweet Society, and the Regret with which I find myself forever separated from it.

I wrote in November last to the Archbishop of Bordeaux,¹ and executed his Commission so far as to send him the Seeds he desired, which I hope arrived in good Order, tho' I have not since heard from him. The kind of wooden houses he wrote for are not usually made here, tho' possibly they may at Boston. But that being remote from me, so that I could not have the least Inspection of the Workmen, I have advised his writing to the French Consul who resides there, and send him an exact Plan of the Buildings with all their Proportions; the Description in the Letter you sent me not being sufficiently precise to be intelligible by our ignorant Carpenters, who therefore could not compute the Cost.

It is rare that we see the Cardinal Bird so far north as Pennsylvania. Those sent here from Virginia generally perish by the Way, being a tender Bird and not well bearing the Sea, so that we have not hitherto been able to get any for Benjamin to take care of. Mr. Alexander has, I understand, sent out several for our Dame² in his Tobacco Ships to France, which never arriv'd, and unless a Friend was going in the

¹ M^{re} de Cicé; he became *garde des sceaux* in 1789. — ED.

² Madame Helvétius. — ED.

Ship who would take more than common Care of them, I suppose one might send an hundred without landing one alive. They would be very happy, I know, if they were once under her Protection; but they cannot come to her, and she will not come to them. She may remember the Offer I made her of 1,000 Acres of Woodland, out of which she might cut a great Garden and have 1,000 Aviaries if she pleased. I have a large Tract on the Ohio where Cardinals are plenty. If I had been a Cardinal myself perhaps I might have prevail'd with her. I am much oblig'd by her kind Offer of sending Robes, Hats, Bonnets, and other French Modes to my good Daughter, the Mother of Benjamin, to whose filial Care of me and Attention to me I owe much of my present Happiness. Inclos'd I send her Commission, which if Notre Dame will be so good as to execute with her usual good Taste and Judgment, Mr. Grand will immediately pay the Bill, and I shall be very thankful.

You have, as we hear, an Assembly of Notables to confer and advise on the Amendment of your Laws and Constitutions of Government. It is remarkable that we should have the same Project here at the same time. Our Assembly is to meet next Month. I pray God that Success may attend the Deliberations of both Assemblies, for the Happiness of both Nations.

My Health continues much in the same State as when I left France, my old Malady not growing worse, so that I am able to go through a good deal of Business, and enjoy the Conversation of my Friends as usual.

Your project of Transporting rather than drowning the good Lady's eighteen Cats, is very humane. The kind Treatment they experience from their present Mistress may

possibly cause an Unwillingness to hazard the Change of Situation; but if they are of the *Angora* Breed, and can be inform'd how two of their Tribe brought over by my Grandson are caress'd and almost ador'd here, they may possibly be induc'd to transport themselves rather than risque any longer the Persecution of the Abbés, which sooner or later must end in their Condemnation. Their Requêté¹ is admirably well written; but their continually Increasing in Number will in time make their Cause insupportable: Their Friends should, therefore, advise them to submit voluntarily either to Transport or to Castration.

The Remarks of a Grammarian on the Particle *on*, are full of Wit and just Satire. My Friends here who understand French have been highly entertain'd with them. They will do good if you publish them. They have had some Effect upon me, as you will see in this Letter: For when I spoke of the prosperous State of our Affairs here, fearing you might suppose that I thought all well because I myself had a profitable Place, I found it proper to add other Reasons.

Your taking the Pains of Translating the Addresses is a strong Mark of the Continuance of your Friendship for me, which gave me as much Pleasure as the Addresses themselves had done, and that, you may, well believe, was not a little: For indeed the Reception I met with on my Arrival far exceeded my Expectation. Popular Favour not the most constant Thing in the World, still continues with regard to me, my Election to the Presidentship for the second Year being unanimous. Whether it will hold out to the End of the third, is uncertain. A Man in high Place has so many Occasions,

¹ This petition of the cats was written by Abbé Morellet, and has often been published in the collected works of Benjamin Franklin. — ED.

which he cannot avoid, of disobliging, if he does his Duty; and those he disobliges have so much more Resentment, than those he obliges have Gratitude, that it often happens when he is strongly attack'd he is weakly defended. You will, therefore, not wonder if you should hear that I do not finish my political Career with the same Eclat that I began it.

It grieves me to learn that you have been afflicted with Sickness. It is, as you say, the Condition of living, but it seems a hard Condition. I sometimes wonder that all good Men and Women are not by Providence kept free from Pain and Disease. In the best of all possible Worlds, I should suppose it must be so; and I am piously inclin'd to believe that this World's not being better made was owing merely to the Badness of the Materials.

Embrace for me tenderly the good Dame, whom I love as ever. I thought to have written to her and to Mr. Cabanis by the Pacquet, but must defer it to the next for want of Time. I am, my dear Friend, with sincere Esteem and Affection, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

Please to present my Respects to M. Le Roy and others of the Wednesday's Dining Party, and love to the Stars and to your Family. My Grandson joins me in best Wishes.

1632. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philadelphia, April 8, 1786.

DEAR SISTER:— I received your kind Letter of the 21st of February; I have also received the Box of Soap, the Substance

of which appears to be very good, but its Consistence had probably been affected by the Frost, for unless very tenderly and cautiously handled, the Cakes would crumble into little Pieces between one's Fingers. However, having an Opportunity of sending some to my Friends, in France, who much admir'd what I had of you formerly, I with much difficulty took out 22 Cakes, which I wrapt separately in spongy Paper, hoping that, as they dry'd, they might consolidate, and the infinite Number of little Cracks that appear'd in them be closed, and the Parts again united, so I sent them away in a small Box. But having since dry'd a cake very gradually, I fear I shall be disappointed in that Expectation, for it seems as crumbly as before, and comes to pieces in the Water, so that I am sorry that I sent any of it away, till I had consulted you upon it, who probably must have met with like Accident before, and might know of some Remedy.

Business having prevented my Writing, Sally has been making an Experiment. She put 3 or 4 pound of the Crumbs, about the size of Chestnuts, into a little Kettle with some Water, and over a slow Fire, melted them together, and when the whole was uniformly fluid, laded it out into little Paper Pans of the Size of the Cakes. These grew stiff when cold, but were rather soft, and shrunk greatly in drying. Being now dry, they are exceedingly hard, close-grained, and solid, and appear to have all the Qualities of excellent Crown Soap. Only in drying they are twisted and warp'd out of Shape; wherefore I have not continu'd the Process on the rest of the Box, but resolv'd to send you this particular Account, thinking you may possibly teach me a better Method.

Capt. All is just arriv'd here, who has given me the pleasure of hearing that you were very well a few Weeks since; he

says he does not remember you to have ever look'd better, or to be more active. I continue much as I have been for some time past, and am always your affectionate Brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

Draw upon me for the Expence of the Soap, and your Bill shall be paid on sight.

1633. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a, April 25, 1786

DEAR SISTER:— I wrote you a long Letter lately about the Soap which I suppose to have become crumbly by means of Frost; and acquainting you that we had made some of the Crumbs solid again by re-melting them with Water. I farther requested your Advice whether to re-melt it all, and in what manner. That you may better understand the Case, I send you herewith some of the crumbly Soap, and a Piece of that which we consolidated by re-melting the Crumbs. But since I wrote that Letter, I find that a few of the Cakes which appear'd ready to fall to pieces, being set separately on their Edges upon a Shelf in a Closet to dry gradually, seem now to have become very firm; and I have therefore this day taken all out of the Box, and set them to dry in the same slow manner; perhaps they may all grow firm, and make the re-melting unnecessary.

I send also with this one of the Books in which is printed my Proposal of a new Alphabet, which you desired to see.

I am ever your affectionate Brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1634. TO ANDREW STRAHAN (L. C.)

Philad^a. May 6. 1786

DEAR SIR,

I receiv'd since my Arrival here your Letters of July 8 and 26. and have inquir'd concerning M^r W^m Peterkin, but do not learn that he has arrived in this State. If I should hereafter hear of him or see him, you may be assured, that I shall, on Acc^t of your Recommendation, render him any Service that may be in my Power.

I condole with you most sincerely on the Departure of your good Father and Mother, my old and beloved Friends. Your Consolation will be that you have been a good and dutiful Son, & that their Memory will ever be respected by all who had the Happiness of being acquainted with them.

Remember me affectionately to your Sister Spottiswoode, and your Brother George. You mention that their Children are well, but say nothing of the Children of your Sister Johnson. I feel my self interested in what relates to any of your Family, and shall be glad to hear also of the Welfare of those Children — I suppose you succeed in the Office of King's Printer.

I thank you for your kind Offers of Service, and I desire that if in any thing I can be of use to you here, you would command me freely.

The Admiralty, in consideration of my having forbid our American Cruisers to intercept or molest Capt. Cook in case they should meet with him on his Return, made me a Present of his last Voyage which Lord Howe sent to me in France; but unluckily a Mistake was made in sending a Duplicate of

the third Volume instead of the first. When my Grandson went afterwards to London, I return'd by him the superfluous 3^d Vol. and he obtain'd for me the first; and it was sent by M^r Woodmason, Stationer, to Rouen for me, together with Cook's second Voyage which my Grandson bought to compleat my Set of the Voyages of that great Navigator: But they never arriv'd or could be heard of. I would therefore now request of you to send me the second Voyage, together with the first Volume of the last; for which my Son, on your presenting him the Account & showing him this Line, will pay the Charge.

With best Wishes for your Prosperity, I am, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend

& most obedient Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1635. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹

Philadelphia, May 6, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A long winter has past, and I have not had the pleasure of a line from you, acquainting me with your and your children's welfare, since I left England. I suppose you have been in Yorkshire, out of the way and knowledge of opportunities; for I will not think that you have forgotten me.

To make me some amends, I received a few days past a large paquet from Mr. Williams, dated September, 1776, near ten years since, containing three letters from you, one of December 12, 1775. This paquet had been received by Mr.

¹ From "A Collection of the Familiar Letters and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Franklin" (1833), p. 204. — ED.

Bache, after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me, *like words*, that had been, as somebody says, *congealed in northern air*. Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming, by strength of memory, all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet, while you were convinced of the utility of our new one; how Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and, relinquishing the old names of the letters, called U *bell*, and P *bottle*; how Eliza began to grow jolly, that is, fat and handsome, resembling aunt Rooke, whom I used to call *my lovely*. Together with all the *then* news of lady Blount's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's decease; of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the channel; of the Vyns and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriage; of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mrs. Scott; of the Wilkeses, the Pearces, Elphinstones, &c.; — concluding with a kind of promise, that, as soon as the ministry and Congress agreed to make peace, I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made; but, alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled.

I have found my family here in health, good circumstances, and well respected by their fellow citizens. The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grandchildren. I have public business enough to preserve me from *ennui*, and private amusement besides in conversation, books, my garden, and *cribbage*. Considering our well-furnished, plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plots and gravel

walks, with trees and flowering shrubs. Cards we sometimes play here, in long winter evenings; but it is as they play at chess, not for money, but for honour, or the pleasure of beating one another. This will not be quite a novelty to you, as you may remember we played together in that manner during the winter at Passy. I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly; but another reflection comes to relieve me, whispering, "*You know that the soul is immortal; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you?*" So, being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favour of doing what I have a mind to, I shuffle the cards again, and begin another game.

As to public amusements, we have neither plays nor operas, but we had yesterday a kind of oratorio, as you will see by the enclosed paper; and we have assemblies, balls, and concerts, besides little parties at one another's houses, in which there is sometimes dancing, and frequently good music; so that we jog on in life as pleasantly as you do in England; anywhere but in London, for there you have plays performed by good actors. That, however, is, I think, the only advantage London has over Philadelphia.

Temple has turned his thoughts to agriculture, which he pursues ardently, being in possession of a fine farm, that his father lately conveyed to him. Ben is finishing his studies at college, and continues to behave as well as when you knew him, so that I think he will make you a good son. His younger brothers and sisters are also promising, appearing to have good tempers and dispositions, as well as good constitutions. As to myself, I think my general health and spirits rather better

than when you saw me. The particular malady I then complained of continues tolerable. With sincere and very great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My children and grandchildren join with me in best wishes for you and yours. My love to my godson, to Eliza, and to honest Tom. They will all find agreeable companions here. Love to Dolly, and tell her she will do well to come with you.

1636. TO MRS. MARY HEWSON¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a May 30, 1786.

DEAR POLLY,

I have just received your kind Letter of April 2, which made me some Amends for your long Silence. By the last Ship from hence I wrote to you acknowledging the Receipt of some very old Letters, when I was sorry I could mention none of later date. I have, however, no right to complain, being so bad a Correspondent myself. But my last was a long one, and I hope you have receiv'd it.

You seem now inclin'd to come over, if you could meet with a Captain, that you know and like. We mention'd it to Captain Falkener. He goes no more to sea, but strongly recommends Capt. Willet, who carries this Letter, as a good Man and excellent Seaman. His Ship is the *Harmony*, which lately brought over Mr. and Mrs. Bingham. Mr. Williams will hardly, I doubt, be with you in time this Year to assist in your Embarkation; but, if you apply to Messrs. Johnson and Company, American Merchants, to whom I

¹ From the original in the possession of T. Hewson Bradford, M.D. -- ED.

write, I am persuaded they will make the Bargain for you, and assist you with their Advice in every Circumstance.

Temple, who presents his Respects, has, however, no Hopes of your Coming. He says you were so long irresolute and wavering about the Journey to Paris, that he thinks it unlikely you will decide firmly to make the Voyage of America.

I enclose a truer State of Affairs in our Country, than your public Prints will afford you, and I pray "God guide you."

This Family are all well, and join in Love to you and yours with your affectionate

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Capt. Willet is to leave London on his Return about the 1st of August. Your *son* Ben, and all this family, join in the hope of your resolving to come over.¹

1637. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a June 3. 1786.

DEAR SISTER,

I have just receiv'd a kind Letter from you without Date; but it is that in which you mention your learning the new Alphabet &c.

Your Grandson behaves very well, and is constantly employ'd in writing for me, and will be so some time longer. As to my Reproving and Advising him, which you desire, he has not hitherto appeared to need it, which is lucky, as I am not fond of giving Advice, having seldom seen it taken. An Italian Poet in his Account of a Voyage to the Moon, tells us that

¹ Mrs. Hewson soon afterwards came over with her family to America, and established herself at Philadelphia. — ED.

All things lost on Earth are treasur'd there.

On which somebody observ'd, There must then be in the Moon a great deal of *Good Advice*.

Ben, concerning whom you enquire, is at the University, and very diligent in his Studies. Will is at the Episcopal Academy, & learns well, the rest are all promising, your Niece particularly, and the whole Family, Thank God, enjoy at present very good Health. — We join in Love to you & yours, I am ever,

Your affectionate Brother

B. FRANKLIN.

Love to Cousin Williams & Family

1638. TO JOHN FRANKLIN, WILLIAM HOOKER
SMITH AND JOHN JENKINS. IN COUNCIL.

(L. L.)

Philad^a June 11. 1786

GENTLEMEN,

I received in its time your Letter of the 25th of February last, written in behalf of the People settled at Wyoming, and requesting a Protection of Government for an Agent who might be sent hither, to explain your Grievances &c. The Request appear'd to us to be reasonable; and such a Protection would have been immediately sent, but that we were told the Gentleman who brought your Letter, Captain Schot being in Town, and well acquainted with your Affairs, the giving him a Hearing might possibly answer your purpose as well, and spare you the Expence & Trouble of sending a special Agent. He was accordingly heard before the Council, and had an Opportunity of conversing separately with several of the Members

as well as the Members of Assembly, and gave so clear and so affecting an Account of the Situation of your People, their present Disposition and former Sufferings, as inclin'd the Government in general to show them every kind of reasonable Favour. The Assembly accordingly took the necessary previous Steps for a Compliance with your Request respecting a separate County which will probably be compleated at their next Session. But as there may be other Matters necessary to be consider'd and discuss'd, in order to establish solid and lasting Quiet, the Council have since judged that it might still be useful if your first Proposal of sending an Agent hither were agreed to, and if one or more, chosen and appointed by the People should accordingly be here about the Beginning of the Session, which was fixt for the 22^d of August next. You may therefore now acquaint the Settlers, that upon Information of such Appointment, a Passport or Safe Conduct under the great Seal for the Person or Persons so appointed shall be sent to you, giving him or them perfect Security in coming, residing here, and returning, from all Arrests on Suits of any kind; and full Freedom & Protection from every Hindrance, Restraint or Molestation whatsoever.

Be assured, Gentlemen, that it will be a great Pleasure to the whole Council, as well as to myself in particular, if we can be instrumental by just & reasonable Measures, in promoting the Happiness of so great a Body of our People as the Settlers of Wyoming consist of.

I am Gentlemen

Your Friend and humble Servt.

B. F.

1639. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

Philadelphia, June 18, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I received in its time your favour of the 15th past,² with an extract from the contract made at Versailles, February 21st, 1783. This extract being a translation, I have spent some time in searching for a copy. I supposed I might have the original, but have not yet met with it, and will now no longer delay my answer, which is, that, if the translation be just, and the original really mentions three millions, as given before the treaty of 1778, it has either been a mistake of one million, or the million received from the Farmers-General is included, as a *don gratuit* of the King; in which latter case, as you observe, they owe us for the tobacco received, in part. For I think it a certainty, that no money was received from the crown, which did not go directly into the hands of Mr. Grand; and, though he accounts for three millions received before 1778, one of them is the million received of the Farmers-General.

An explanation and adjustment of this matter may, I make no doubt, be easily obtained by writing to Mr. Grand and Mr. Jefferson. There can be no error of that magnitude in Mr. Grand's accounts, for they were rendered to the Commissioners from time to time, and settled while all the transac-

¹ First printed by Sparks, Vol. X, p. 443. The affair of "the lost million" is referred to in the following letters: to Ferdinand Grand, July 11, 1786; to Charles Thomson, January 27, 1787; and also in various letters from M. Durival to M. Grand and from M. Grand to Franklin found in Sparks, Vol. X, pp. 269-272. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

tions were fresh in memory. And I am persuaded, the minister will very readily either correct the error in the contract, or direct our demanding of the Farmers the value of the tobacco, as the case may be. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1640. TO NOAH WEBSTER (L. L.)

Philad^a June 18, 1786.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 24th past,¹ with the Scheme inclosed of your reform'd Alphabet. I think the Reformation not only necessary, but practicable; but have so much to say to you on the Subject, that I wish to see and confer with you upon it, as that would save much Time and Writing. Sounds, till such an Alphabet is fix'd, not being easily explain'd or discours'd of clearly upon Paper.

I have formerly consider'd this Matter pretty fully, and contriv'd some of the means of carrying it into Execution, so as gradually to render the Reformation general. Our Ideas are so nearly similar, that I make no doubt of our easily agreeing on the Plan; and you may depend on the best Support I may be able to give it, as a Part of your *Institute*,² of which I wish you would bring with you a compleat Copy, having as yet seen only a part of it: I shall then be better able to recommend it as you desire. Hoping to have soon the Pleasure of seeing you, I do not enlarge, but am with sincere Esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ In A. P. S. — ED.

² Grammatical Institute of the English Language, published in 1784. — ED.

1641. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (L. C.)

Philad^a June 27, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND: — My Time being much taken up with the Business of my present Station, I can now only write a short Letter; but in the Volume of our Transactions, which I send you herewith, you will find a very long Letter, which I wrote to you at Sea when on my Passage hither. I inclose some Papers relating to your Affair with Wharton. The promise therein made, tho' repeatedly urg'd by me and Mr. Vaughan, was never fulfilled. The Father is since stricken with the Palsie, and the Son is in a worse Situation, — being, as is said, an habitual Drunkard. In short, I believe nothing is to be done with him by fair Means, and unless you send a Power of Attorney to sue for your Demand, or come yourself, I am afraid you will never get anything. You are upon the List of Persons nominated to be Members of our Philosophical Society, and will be chosen undoubtedly at the next full Meeting, which perhaps will not be till January next. I have given them the German Edition of your Pieces, which you presented to them; and have told them that I have some other Presents from you which I shall deliver as soon as I can put my things in order so as to find them.

Except that I am too much encumber'd with Business, I find myself happily situated here, among my numerous Friends, plac'd at the Head of my Country by its unanimous Voice, in the Bosom of my Family, my Offspring to wait on me and nurse me, in a House I built 23 Years since to my Mind.

My Malady, the Stone, indeed continues, but does not grow worse; and human Nature is subject to so many more terrible Evils, that I ought to be content with the Share allotted me. I rejoice to hear that the Difference between the Emperor and your Country is accommodated, for I love Peace. You will see in the Treaty we have made with Prussia some Marks of my Endeavors to lessen the Calamities of future Wars. Present my humble Respects, and best wishes to your good Master, if you think they may not be unacceptable, and believe me ever, with sincere Affection, your old true Friend and humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

If you send a Power of Attorney, let it be to Mr. Samuel Vaughan, jr.

1642. TO ———¹

(L. C.)

Phila. July 3. 1786. (?)

DEAR SIR,

I have read your Manuscript with some Attention. By the Argument it contains against the Doctrines of a particular Providence, tho' you allow a general Providence, you strike at the Foundation of all Religion. For without the Belief of a Providence, that takes Cognizance of, guards, and guides, and may favour particular Persons, there is no Motive to Worship a Deity, to fear its Displeasure, or to pray for its Protection. I will not enter into any Discussion of your Principles, tho'

¹ The auto. draft of this letter in A. P. S. is endorsed by Franklin: "Rough of Letter dissuading ——— from publishing his Piece." S. published it as addressed to Thomas Paine. The deistical writings of Thomas Paine were not published until several years after the supposed date of this letter. — ED.

you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my Opinion, that, though your Reasonings are subtile, and may prevail with some Readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general Sentiments of Mankind on that Subject, and the Consequence of printing this Piece will be, a great deal of Odium drawn upon yourself, Mischief to you, and no Benefit to others. He that spits against the Wind, spits in his own Face.

But, were you to succeed, do you imagine any Good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous Life, without the Assistance afforded by Religion; you having a clear Perception of the Advantages of Virtue, and the Disadvantages of Vice, and possessing a Strength of Resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common Temptations. But think how great a Proportion of Mankind consists of weak and ignorant Men and Women, and of inexperienc'd, and inconsiderate Youth of both Sexes, who have need of the Motives of Religion to restrain them from Vice, to support their Virtue, and retain them in the Practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great Point for its Security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your Religious Education, for the Habits of Virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent Talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a Rank with our most distinguish'd Authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a Youth, to be receiv'd into the Company of men, should prove his Manhood by beating his Mother.

I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the Tyger, but to burn this Piece before it is seen by any other Person; whereby you will save yourself a great deal of Morti-

fication from the Enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of Regret and Repentance. If men are so wicked as we now see them *with religion*, what would they be *if without it*. I intend this Letter itself as a *Proof* of my Friendship, and therefore add no *Professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours,

B. F.

1643. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a July 4, 1786.

DEAR SISTER,

I receiv'd the second Box of Soap, which appears very firm and very good. I am much obliged by the Pains you have taken to humour me in that Matter.¹ You need not be concern'd, in writing to me, about your bad Spelling; for, in my Opinion, as our Alphabet now Stands, the bad Spelling, or what is call'd so, is generally the best, as conforming to the Sound of the Letters and of the Words. To give you an Instance: A Gentleman receiving a Letter, in which were these Words, — *Not finding Brown at hom, I delivard your meseg to his yf*. The Gentleman finding it bad Spelling, and therefore not very intelligible, called his Lady to help him read it. Between them they pick'd out the meaning of all but the *yf*, which they could not understand. The lady propos'd calling her Chambermaid: for Betty, says she, has the best knack at reading bad Spelling of any one I know. Betty came, and was surprised, that neither Sir nor Madam could tell what *yf* was. "Why," says she, "*y f* spells *Wife*; what else can it spell?" And, indeed, it is a much better, as

¹ See letter to Mrs. Mecom, April 8, 1786. — ED.

well as shorter method of spelling *Wife*, than by *doubleyou*, *i, ef, e*, which in reality spells *doubleyijey*.

Your Grandson is well and behaves well. The Family also is all well. There is much Rejoicing in Town to-day, it being the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which we sign'd this day Ten Years, and thereby hazarded Lives and Fortunes. God was pleas'd to put a favourable End to the Contest much sooner than we had reason to expect. His Name be praised. Adieu, your affectionate Brother

B. FRANKLIN.

1644. TO CHARLES THOMSON (L. C.)

Philad^a July 6, 1786.

SIR: — This will be delivered to you by Scotosh, son to the Half-King to the Wyondot Nation, who is well recommended as having been always very friendly to our People, and who, with his Suite, goes to New York on a Visit to Congress. I make no doubt but the same Care will be taken of them, that they may be accommodated comfortably while at New York, as they have experienc'd here. With great Esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

[Endorsed: Read 12 July, 1786. Referred to Secretary at War to report.]

[ENCLOSURE.]

Philadelphia, July 3, 1786.

Scotosh, an Indian chief of the Wyondots, and son to the half-king of that nation, visited the President, accompanied by Mons. Pierre Drouillier, a French trader of Detroit, as Interpreter, who acquainted the President that the Chief had a few words to deliver from his Father.

The Chief then taking in his hand three strings of white wampum, said :

“ Brothers, I come from my Father to speak to you of good and bad affairs; good and bad news my Father now speaks.

“ ‘ My Brothers :

“ ‘ I inform you that among my people all is good ; we have no bad affairs, no bad news, to relate to you. Nor have I heard of any bad news from Detroit. [A string.]

“ ‘ Near the Falls I have heard there are bad affairs ; but that country is far from mine. There are some bad people thereabouts, vagabonds from different nations, but none of my people are among them. [A string.]

“ ‘ My Brothers :

“ ‘ I shall be very glad to hear that the measuring the Indian country may be delayed. For the bad people will, I fear, take occasion from the measuring to do more mischief. Perhaps the measurers will be killed. And it would give pain to me and my nation to hear such bad news.’ ” [A string.]

The chief then spoke as from himself :

“ Brothers :

“ You have made a good clear road for us to come to you without danger or inconvenience. I have found it good and safe, having been kindly treated everywhere by your people. We will do the same for them, when they have occasion to pass through our country.

“ Brothers :

“ I request you would as soon as possible let me know what you think of the words I brought from my father, that I may acquaint him therewith, and the mischief to the measurers may be prevented.”

He added that he was going to New York to visit the Congress, and that he had a curiosity to cross the seas and see France.

The President replied that he would communicate the words to the Council, and on Wednesday give an answer. He had no expectation of so much formality in this visit, or he should have requested a meeting of the Council to receive him.

July 5, 1786.

Scotosh, son to the half-king of the Wyondots, with Mr. Drouillier, his Interpreter, coming again to the President’s house, the President spoke to him as follows : —

“ Brother :

“ I have communicated to the Council the words you delivered to me from your father, and we now return the answer I am about to give you to be sent him.

“ ‘ Our Brother :

“ ‘ We are glad to learn from you that there are no bad affairs in your country, and that all is well with you. We hope it may long so continue. [A string.]

“Our Brother:

“We know there are some bad people about the Falls, from whence we sometimes hear of mischief done by them. We are glad that none of our friends, the Wyondots, are among them. For they will probably soon suffer for their evil action. [A string.]

“Our Brother:

“This state of Pennsylvania measures no land but what has been fairly purchased of the Six Nations. The country you speak of is far beyond our limits, and the measuring of it under the direction of Congress. It is therefore with that great Council to consider your friendly advice on that subject.” [A string.]

The President then acquainted Scotosh that, as he was going to New York, the Council had ordered some money to be given to him for his travelling expense (which was accordingly done,) and that the charge of their entertainment while here would also be defrayed; for which he returned hearty thanks. He was at the same time assured that we should endeavor always to keep the road between us as open, clear, and safe as he always found it.

1645. TO JOHN JAY

(L. C.)

Philad^a July 6, 1786.

SIR:—The inclos'd Paper will inform you of what has pass'd here between Scotosh, a Chief of the Wyondot Nation, and this Government, on his Way to Congress: He is recommended as having been always very friendly to our People, and the Council have defray'd the Expence of him and his Company here and to New York, where, as Col. Harmar informs, he is to visit Congress. He expresses a strong Desire of going to France; but as it must cost something considerable to support him thither, there, and back again, we have given him no Expectation that the Congress will approve of it: But if it could be well afforded, I should conceive it might be of Use to our Affairs in that Part of the Country, if, after viewing the Court and Troops and Population of France,

he should return impress'd with a high Idea of the Greatness and Power of our Ally, and thence be able to influence the Western Indians with Opinions proper to defeat the Insinuations of the English who are posted on those Frontiers.

With great Regards, I have the Honour to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1646. TO DR. ARTHAUD¹ (L. C.)

Philadelphia, July 9. 1786.

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 15th of March last,² together with the printed Pieces that accompanied it. It gave me great Pleasure to find, that the Improvement of Science is attended to in a Country, where the Climate was suppos'd naturally to occasion Indolence, and an Unwillingness to take Pains except for immediate Profit. I am very sensible of the great Honour done me by the Society of Philadelphians,³ in naming me among their Associates; and I beg they would accept my thankful Acknowledgements, together with the second Volume of the Transactions of our Society here. I am much oblig'd by the favourable mention you were pleased to make of me in your excellent Discourse at the first Opening of your Assemblies. Your Account of the Cape, contains a Variety of Knowledge respecting it that we had not before, and many Particular Observations for preserving Health, that may be useful to our Northern

¹ Secretary of Cercle des Philadelphes, Cap Française, Cape Haytien. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

³ A society for the cultivation of Arts and Sciences in St. Domingo. — ED.

People who visit your Island. Wishing Success to the Labours of the Society, I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1647. TO NOAH WEBSTER (L. C.)

Philad^a July 9, 1786.

SIR:—I received your Favour of the 23d past.¹ I think with you that your Lecturing on the Language will be of great Use in preparing the Minds of People for the Improvements proposed, and therefore would not advise your omitting any of the Engagements you have made, for the sake of being here sooner than your Business requires — that is, in September or October next. I shall then be glad to see and confer with you on the Subject, being with great Esteem, Sir, etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1648. TO FERDINAND GRAND² (L. C.)

Philadelphia, July 11, 1786.

SIR,

I send you enclosed some letters, that have passed between the Secretary of Congress and me, respecting three million of Livres, acknowledged to have been received, before the Treaty of February 1778 as *Don gratuit* from the King, of which only Two Millions are found in your accounts; unless the

¹ In A. P. S. — ED.

² From the Jefferson Papers (L. C.). — ED.

million from the Farmers-General be one of the three. I have [been] assured, that all the money received from the King, whether as Loan or Gift, went through your hands; and as I always looked on the million we had of the Farmers-General to be distinct from what we had of the Crown, I wonder how I came to sign the Contract acknowledging three millions of gift, when, in reality, there was only two, exclusive of that from the Farmers; and as both you and I examined the project of the Contract before I signed it, I am surprised, that neither of us took notice of the error.

It is possible, that the million furnished ostensibly by the Farmers, was in fact a gift of the Crown, in which case, as Mr. Thomson observes, they owe us for the two Ship Loads of Tobacco, which they received on account of it. I most earnestly request of you to get this matter explained, that I may stand clear before I die, lest some enemy should afterwards accuse me of having received a million not accounted for. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1649. TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (L. C.)

Philad^a, July 29. 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received lately the 3^d Volume of your Experiments and Observations relating to various Branches of Natural Philosophy, for which please to accept my Thanks. It contains a great deal of very curious & interesting Matter. I know of no Philosopher who starts so much good Game for the Hunters after Knowledge as you do. Go on and prosper. — Our Society will be much oblig'd by the Volume you have sent to

them, which shall be deliver'd at their next Meeting; and you will receive by M^{rs} Vaughan the second Volume of their Transactions.

I forget whether it was by you or by D^r Price that the Bearer M^r Nicklin was formerly recommended to me. He has married and settled among us, and is much esteemed here.

I am, my dear Friend, with great Sincerity,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1650. TO RICHARD PRICE ¹ (L. C.)

Philad. July 29, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I could not let this Opportunity, by M^{rs} Nicklin, pass without saluting you. I hope you continue well, as I do, my old Malady excepted, and that so useful a Life as yours will be long protracted. I repeat my Thanks to you for the Pamphlet you so kindly sent me. I should ere now have try'd the Remedy indicated in it, but my Glass Instrument for impregnating Liquors with fix'd Air, being lent into the Country, I have been kept in continual Expectation of its being return'd, and am hitherto disappointed; at which I have been the less uneasy, as the Pain has been tolerable generally, and I do not find that the Malady grows worse.

Our Philosophical Society think themselves honour'd by your Acceptance of their Diploma. You will receive by M^{rs} Vaughan a second Volume of their Transactions.

I see there are mischievous Spirits at work, labouring to dis-

¹ From auto. draft in L. C. The original letter is in the possession of Walter Ashburner, Esq., of London. — ED.

turb the Peace between our Countries, but I trust they will not succeed. We are improving daily in public Prudence and the true Knowledge of our essential Interests; and notwithstanding some political Errors hard to eradicate, I flatter myself that on the whole and in time we shall do very well: Indeed I think I see evident Marks of the favourable Hand of Providence in our Affairs: for even our own Blunders, and the Malice of our Enemies, are made to operate our Advantage. My best Wishes attend you and good M^{rs} Price, being ever, my dear Friend

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1651. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN (L. C.)

Philad^a, July 31, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

I recollect, that, when I had the great Pleasure of seeing you at Southampton, now a 12month since, we had some Conversation on the bad Effects of Lead taken inwardly; and that at your Request I promis'd to send you in writing a particular Account of several Facts I then mention'd to you, of which you thought some good use might be made. I now sit down to fulfil that Promise.

The first Thing I remember of this kind was a general Discourse in Boston, when I was a Boy, of a Complaint from North Carolina against New England Rum, that it poison'd their People, giving them the Dry Bellyach, with a Loss of the Use of their Limbs. The Distilleries being examin'd on the Occasion, it was found that several of them used leaden Still-heads and Worms, and the Physicians were of Opinion,

that the Mischief was occasioned by that Use of Lead. The Legislature of the Massachusetts thereupon pass'd an Act, prohibiting under severe Penalties the Use of such Still-heads and Worms thereafter. Inclos'd I send you a Copy of the Acc^t, taken from my printed Law-book.

In 1724, being in London, I went to work in the Printing-House of Mr. Palmer, Bartholomew Close, as a Compositor. I there found a Practice, I had never seen before, of drying a Case of Types (which are wet in Distribution) by placing it sloping before the Fire. I found this had the additional Advantage, when the Types were not only dry'd but heated, of being comfortable to the Hands working over them in cold weather. I therefore sometimes heated my Case when the Types did not want drying. But an old Workman, observing it, advis'd me not to do so, telling me I might lose the Use of my Hands by it, as two of our Companions had nearly done, one of whom that us'd to earn his Guinea a Week, could not then make more than ten Shillings, and the other, who had the Dangles, but seven and sixpence. This, with a kind of obscure Pain, that I had sometimes felt, as it were in the Bones of my Hand when working over the Types made very hot, induced me to omit the Practice. But talking afterwards with Mr. James, a Letter-founder in the same Close, and asking him if his People, who work'd over the little Furnaces of melted Metal, were not subject to that Disorder; he made light of any danger from the effluvia, but ascribed it to Particles of the Metal swallow'd with their Food by slovenly Workmen, who went to their Meals after handling the Metal, without well washing their Fingers, so that some of the metalline Particles were taken off by their Bread and eaten with it. This appeared to have some Reason in it. But

the Pain I had experienc'd made me still afraid of those Effluvia.

Being in Derbyshire at some of the Furnaces for Smelting of Lead Ore, I was told, that the Smoke of those Furnaces was pernicious to the neighbouring Grass and other Vegetables; but I do not recollect to have heard any thing of the Effect of such Vegetables eaten by Animals. It may be well to make the Enquiry.

In America I have often observ'd, that on the Roofs of our shingled Houses, where Moss is apt to grow in northern Exposures, if there be any thing on the Roof painted with white Lead, such as Balusters, or Frames of dormant Windows, &c., there is constantly a Streak on the Shingles from such Paint down to the Eaves, on which no Moss will grow, but the wood remains constantly clean and free from it. We seldom drink RainWater that falls on our Houses; and if we did, perhaps the small Quantity of Lead, descending from such Paint, might not be sufficient to produce any sensible ill Effect on our Bodies. But I have been told of a Case in Europe, I forgot the Place, where a whole Family was afflicted with what we call the Dry Bellyach, or *Colica Pictonum*, by drinking Rain-Water. It was at a Country-Seat, which, being situated too high to have the Advantage of a Well, was supply'd with Water from a Tank, which received the Water from the leaded Roofs. This had been drunk several Years without Mischief; but some young Trees planted near the House growing up above the Roof, and shedding their Leaves upon it, it was suppos'd that an Acid in those Leaves had corroded the Lead they cover'd, and furnish'd the Water of that Year with its baneful Particles and Qualities.

When I was in Paris with Sir John Pringle in 1767, he

visited *La Charité*, a Hospital particularly famous for the Cure of that Malady, and brought from thence a Pamphlet containing a List of the Names of Persons, specifying their Professions or Trades, who had been cured there. I had the Curiosity to examine that List, and found that all the Patients were of Trades, that, some way or other, use or work in Lead; such as Plumbers, Glaziers, Painters, &c., excepting only two kinds, Stonecutters and Soldiers. These I could not reconcile to my Notion, that Lead was the cause of that Disorder. But on my mentioning this Difficulty to a Physician of that Hospital, he inform'd me that the Stonecutters are continually using melted Lead to fix the Ends of Iron Balustrades in Stone; and that the Soldiers had been employ'd by Painters, as Labourers, in Grinding of Colours.

This, my dear Friend, is all I can at present recollect on the Subject. You will see by it, that the Opinion of this mischievous Effect from Lead is at least above Sixty Years old; and you will observe with Concern how long a useful Truth may be known and exist, before it is generally receiv'd and practis'd on.

I am, ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1652. TO MATHEW CAREY¹ (L. C.)

August 10, 86.

SIR:—The Memoirs you mention would be of little or no Use to your Scheme, as they contain only some Notes of my

¹ Mathew Carey had written to Franklin the previous day, August 9, 1786 (A. P. S.), to ask on the behalf of the proprietors of the *Columbian Magazine* permission to publish an account of Franklin's life with a likeness of him. — ED.

early Life, and finish in 1730. They were written to my Son, and intended only as Information to my Family. I have in hand a full Acct of my Life which I propose to leave behind me; in the meantime I wish nothing of the kind may be publish'd, and shall be much oblig'd to the Proprietors of the Columbian Magazine if they will drop that Intention, for the present. With great Esteem, I am, Sir, your most obed^t Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1653. TO WILLIAM COCKE¹ (L. C.)

Philad^a, August 12, 1786.

SIR,

I received yesterday the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 15th of June past.² I had never before been acquainted, that the Name of your intended New State had any Relation with my Name, having understood that it was called *FrankLand*. It is a very great Honour indeed, that its Inhabitants have done me, and I should be happy if it were in my Power to show how sensible I am of it, by something more essential than my Wishes for their Prosperity.

Having resided some Years past in Europe, and being but lately arrived thence, I have not had an Opportunity of being well inform'd of the Points in Dispute between you and the State of North Carolina. I can therefore only say, that I think you are perfectly right in resolving to submit them to the

¹ William Cocke was a native of Virginia who served in the Virginian legislature, and later became colonel and brigadier-general of militia in Tennessee. He and William Blount were the first senators from Tennessee (1796). — ED.

² In A. P. S. The new state separated from North Carolina was afterwards named Tennessee. — ED.

Decision of Congress, and to abide by their Determination. It is a wise and impartial Tribunal, which can have no sinister Views to warp its Judgment. It is happy for us all, that we have now in our own Country such a Council to apply to, for composing our Differences, without being oblig'd, as formerly, to carry them across the Ocean to be decided, at an immense Expence, by a Council which knew little of our Affairs, would hardly take any Pains to understand them, and which often treated our Applications with Contempt, and rejected them with injurious Language. Let us, therefore, cherish and respect our own Tribunal; for the more generally it is held in high Regard, the more able it will be to answer effectually the Ends of its Institution, the quieting of our contentions, and thereby promoting and securing our common Peace and Happiness.

I do not hear any Talk of an Adjournment of Congress, concerning which you enquire; and I rather think it likely they may continue to sit out their Year, as it is but lately they have been able to make a Quorum for Business, which must therefore probably be in Arrear. If you proceed in your intended Journey, I shall be glad to see you as you pass through Philadelphia. In the mean time I have the Honour to be, very respectfully, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1654. TO JEAN-BAPTISTE LE ROY (L. C.)

Philad^a Aug^t 15. 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

When I was in France, I was press'd by M. Le Noir, and M. Cadet, to give a Description of my Stove for burning

Smoke, they conceiving it might be useful to the Citizens of Paris. I promis'd to do it, but had not time while I staid there. When at Sea, I wrote that with some other Pieces, which being read to our Philosophical Society here, are now printed in their Transactions. — I send you herewith a Copy. I address'd it to you, wishing that if those publick Spirited Gentlemen continue in the mind of publishing it, you would do me the Honour to take care of the Translation. — M. Cadet has my Plate for it ready engrav'd, which I left with him. The other two Pieces are, One on the Causes and Cure of Smoky Chimneys address'd to D^r Ingenhousz our common Friend, the other containing maritime Observations address'd to our common Brother. M^r Grand will show them to you if you desire it: tho' you will receive the Volume (by the first Ship from this Port,) which contains them all. — There is a Volume also for the Academy.

I am, ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

I receiv'd a Letter from you
lately which had been very long
in its Passage. I shall write
to you fully per first Ship

1655. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad^a. Aug^t 15. 1786.

DEAR FRIEND,

Having at length been persuaded to build two Houses, this Year, I wrote to you sometime since requesting you to put your self in Cash for me by selling my Actions of the Caisse

d'Escompte; and I have since drawn on you two Bills for Two hundred and Fifty Pound's Sterling each, dated the 29th and the 30th of July last, or 28th and 29th, both Setts in favour of the same Person M^r Meade Merchant of this City, and payable in London at 40 Days sight, which I make no doubt will be duly honoured. I must continue to draw from time to time as my Buildings go on, and I request you would keep me advis'd of the Payment that I may continually see how our Account goes on. I bespoke before I left France some Printing Letters of M^r Didot, they are for Benjamin. If ready I request you would pay for them, and ship them for me by the first convenient Opportunity. I do not know the Amount. — I wish you to buy for me also the Marquis de Chastellux's Voyages in America. I am much in Arrear with my Friends in France on the Score of Correspondence. But by the first Ship going from hence thither, I will endeavour to clear my Accounts. This goes via New York. My Family continues in good Health, Thanks to God: Those you knew of us join in best Wishes of Prosperity to you & yours; and I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1656. TO JOHN JAY

(L. C.)

Philad^a, Aug^t 24, 1786.

DEAR SIR: — I hear a Treaty is compleated with Portugal. As soon as it may be made public, you will oblige me much by favouring me with a Copy of it.

The Monument of General Montgomery, may I ask what

is become of it? It has formerly been said, that Republicks are naturally ungrateful. The immediate Resolution of Congress for erecting that Monument contradicts that Opinion; but the letting the Monument lie eight Years unpack'd, if true, seems rather a Confirmation of it.

On a Review of my Affairs since my Return, I think it proper to make some Change in the Dispositions of my Will. Having no other Copy on this Side the Water but that in your Possession, I wish you to send it to me, which will much oblige, dear Sir, your most obed^t Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1657. ON THERMOMETERS

September 13, 1786.

THE two thermometers most generally in use at present, among the philosophers of Europe, are those of Réaumur and Fahrenheit. The French use Réaumur's, the English Fahrenheit's.

In their respective graduations, Réaumur marked his freezing point 0, Fahrenheit fixed his at 32 of his degrees above 0, and two of his degrees are just equal to one of Réaumur's. I know that in some instruments this equality is not exact; but, in two which I have, the one Réaumur's, made by Cappy in Paris, the other Fahrenheit's, by Nairne, London, it is precisely so, they hanging together in the same room. And those workmen are famed for their exactness.

In reading, one frequently finds degrees of heat and cold mentioned, as measured by one or the other of those thermometers, and one is at a loss to reduce that least known to the other.

Rule.

Suppose the degree mentioned is 25 of Réaumur, which is 25 degrees above 0, or its freezing point, and you would know to what degree of Fahrenheit that answers;

Double the 25, which will give you 50 of Fahrenheit's, and to them add 32, his number at the freezing point, and you will have 82, the degree of Fahrenheit's equal to 25 of Réaumur.

On the contrary, if you would reduce Fahrenheit to Réaumur, first subtract 32, and then take half of the remainder; thus taking 32 from 82, there remains 50, and the half of 50 is 25.

This answers in all cases where the degree is above the freezing point.

If below, double the degrees of Réaumur, and subtract them from the 32 of Fahrenheit, which will give you the equivalent degree of his scale. Thus, suppose it 5 below 0, or the freezing point of Réaumur; twice 5 is 10, which deducted from 32, Fahrenheit's freezing point, gives you 22 as the equivalent degree of his thermometer.

And halving the degrees of Fahrenheit that are less than 32, you have the degree of Réaumur. Thus 22 of Fahrenheit being 10 degrees less than 32, the half of 10 is 5, the equivalent degree of Réaumur.

B. FRANKLIN.

1658. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a, Sept. 21, 1786.

MY DEAR SISTER: — I received your kind Letter of the 25th past, by our Cousin Williams, who, besides, informs me of your Welfare, which gives me great Pleasure.

Your Grandson having finished all the Business I had to employ him in, set out for Boston a few Days before Cousin Williams arrived. I suppose he may be with you before this time.

I had begun to build two good Houses next the Street, instead of three old Ones which I pull'd down, but my Neighbour disputing my Bounds, I have been obliged to postpone till that Dispute is settled by Law. In the meantime, the Workmen, and Materials being ready, I have ordered an Addition to the House I live in, it being too small for our growing Family. There are a good many Hands employ'd, and I hope to see it cover'd in before Winter. I propose to have in it a long Room for my Library and Instruments, with two good Bedchambers and two Garrets. The Library is to be even with the Floor of my best old Chamber; and the Story under it will for the present be employ'd only to hold Wood, but may be made into Rooms hereafter. This Addition is on the Side next the River. I hardly know how to justify building a library at an Age that will so soon oblige me to quit it; but we are apt to forget that we are grown old, and Building is an Amusement.

I think you will do well to instruct your Grandson in the Art of making that Soap. It may be of use to him, and 'tis pity it should be lost.

Some knowing Ones here in Matters of Weather predict a hard Winter. Permit me to have the Pleasure of helping to keep you warm. Lay in a good Stock of Firewood, and draw upon me for the Amount. Your Bill shall be paid upon Sight by your affectionate Brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1659. TO MLLE. LE RAY DE CHAUMONT

(L. C.)

Philadelphie ce 7 Octob^e 1786.

MA CHÈRE FEMME,

Dans cette éloignement de mes Amis de France, je trouve quelque Consolation en parcourant leurs Epîtres amicales, quoique anciennes. Ce jour-ci j'ai relu avec nouveau Plaisir la votre (sans datte) dans laquelle vous me faites des Instances la plus obligeantes de retourner habiter mon ancienne chambre. Cela me fait souvenir comme j'y a vecu heureusement tant d'années, jouissant de votre Amitié & de ce de toute la chere Famille. Ces jours hélas ! sont passées, pour ne revenir jamais. Et comme je suis déjà dans l'autre monde, vous etes libre de prendre un meilleur Mari, que je vous souhaite de tout mon cœur. Mons. votre Frere a l'envie de nous priver d'une des nos meilleurs Filles pour en faire sa Femme et l'amener en France ; il faut qu'en justice il doit nous envoyer une de ses Sœurs pour nous de dommager : Le sera encore mieux si vous venez tous ensemble vous etablir dans ce bon pays. Je serai ravi de vous embrasser tous, le bon Pere, le bonne Mere, & tous les bonnes enfans, sans omettre aucun, — les mariées.

Quant à la Demoiselle ci-dessus mentionné, c'est une tres aimable Fille, & d'une des premieres Familles de ce Pays. Elle a une Caractere excellente, & elle vous fera une bonne Sœur. Comme vous aimer votre cher Frere, vous feres bien de disposer, autant que vous pouvez, ses Parens a lui donner leur Consentement.

Adieu, ma tres chere Amie, & me croyez toujours la votre :

B. F.

P. S. Vous me demandez si j'ai payé M. Leleu pour les Bougies. Je trouve parmi mes papiers son Memoire pour 25 livres Bougies a 58 sols — 72++ 10. J'en avoit partié & sur la Memoire est la décharge de ma part que j'ai payé a M. notre Pere: 22 May 85.

tres mauvais françois, n'est ce pas?

1660. TO DONATIEN LE RAY DE CHAUMONT
(L. C.)

Philad^a, October 7, 1786.

DEAR FRIEND: — I have just been writing a French Letter to Mademoiselle Chaumont; but it costs me too much time to write in that Language, and after all 'tis very bad French, and I therefore write to you in English, which I think you will as easily understand; if not, ma chère amie Sophie, can interpret it for you.

Some of our Letters are long on the Way. The one you were so kind as to write me the 24th of September, '85,¹ did not come to hand till the Beginning of June '86, and lately M. Le Caze tells me that he had a Packet from you to me, but that he unfortunately left it at L'Orient, and it is not yet arriv'd.

If you have made any further Experiments in whitening the green vegetable Wax, I shall be glad to hear what Success you have met with.

I have frequently the Pleasure of seeing your valuable Son, whom I love as my own. He has communicated to me his Inclination to marry a young Lady of this Country,²

¹ In A. P. S. — ED.

² Miss Coxe of New Jersey. — ED.

and that he has written to you for your and his Mother's Consent. I wish his Happiness, and I believe he will find it in the Choice he has made, if you approve of it: for the Lady bears an excellent Character, and is one of the first Families in this Country.

Please to present my affectionate Respects to Madam de Chaumont, and my Love to all your Children.

With great Esteem and Affection, I am, my dear Friend,
yours most sincerely,

My Grandsons present their Respects and best Wishes.

B. FRANKLIN.

1661. TO CHARLES PETTIT¹ (L. C.)

Philad^a. Oct. 10. 1786

SIR,

I received the Letter you did me the Honour of writing to me the 30th past. The Major Judd you mention has not been here, unless a Person who came to me one Evening to enquire where Franklin & Jenkins lodged, was the Man. He appeared as a Traveller just alighted from his Horse, seemed in great Hurry and Trepidation, anxious to find them immediately, but told me nothing of his Business. I could not give him the Information he wanted, and he went from me to M^r Pelatiah Webster, who acquainted him they were gone home, and he then enquired the Road to Wyoming that he might follow them. M^r Webster came to me a Day or two after, and brought me the enclos'd Paper, a kind of Manifesto, of which he said that Person had a Number of Copies and had

¹ Charles Pettit (1736-1806), a Philadelphia merchant, and delegate to Congress (1785-1787). — ED.

left this with him; but was not farther communicative. It is remarkable that it is signed by Franklin and Jenkins at Wyoming the 12th of September, when they were here attending the Assembly, had been here sometime before and continu'd here for some time after, that Date. The Vice President to whom I communicated it, thinks it manufactur'd in this Town: I rather suspect it a Manœuvre of Allen's. — Perhaps you may learn whether it was really printed [at] Hudson. I have heard there is one Hamilton there, who busy's himself much in the Wyoming Affairs.

I read to the Council your Letter as far it concern'd those Affairs and the Recommendation of Judd's Son as Prothonotary for the new County. It appear'd to be the general Sentiment that too little was known of him, and that he was probably too young. The Choice nearly unanimous fell upon Col. Pickering, who it is hoped, as he is himself a Connecticut Man may be a means of conciliating Matters in that hitherto unhappy Country.

With regard to the Spanish Treaty I am not sufficiently inform'd of the Particulars upon which Advice can be clearly founded. I do not know what Advantages Spain proposes as an Equivalent for our agreeing to the Restraint, which she does not already allow to all other Nations. I think indeed, that the Use of the River for *ascending* with Ships is worth very little, being naturally impracticable to any Advantage, from the Time it requires & the Labour, but for *descending*, it is of great Importance to all our Country beyond the Mountains; not indeed so much at present, till the Settlers have spare Produce for Exportation; but the Prospect, and that not very distant, of having that Outlet free and open, encourages the Settlement, which a Restraint would discourage. I

should therefore rather advise Procrastination, and drawing the Treaty out into length, by making new or varying old Propositions which would require sending to Spain for fresh Instructions, and which from the natural Slowness of that Court would be long before they came: for Time may produce a new King with new Ideas, or new Ministers with different Views, while we are daily growing stronger and more in a Condition of giving Weight to our Claims. And after all I should rather be for buying them out of the Country entirely by a fair Treaty of Purchase for some valuable Consideration, than to think of driving them out by Force, being almost sure it would be cheaper as well as honester. Perhaps it might not be amiss to set on foot such a Treaty immediately. A Guarantee of their other Possessions in America might have Weight in it. With great Esteem, I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient
& most humble Servant
B. FRANKLIN.

1662. TO CHARLES BIDDLE¹ (A. P. S.)

Thursday, Nov. 2, '86.

SIR,

The Report you mention that your Conduct had been disapproved and complain'd of by me, is an infamous Falshood. You have always appear'd to me an excellent Officer, well understanding the Duties of your Station, and indefati-

¹ Vice-President of Pennsylvania, father of Nicholas Biddle, President of the United States Bank. — ED.

gably active in the Performance of those Duties. I give you this Testimonial with great Pleasure, being with sincere & great Esteem, Sir,

Your most obed^t Serv^t

B. FRANKLIN.

1663. TO ABBÉ DE LA ROCHE (L. C.)

Philad^a, Nov. 20, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I hope soon to be in a Situation when I can write largely and fully to my Friends in France, without the perpetual Interruptions I now daily meet with. At present I can only tell you that I am well,

and that I esteem you,	} infinitely
and l'Abbé Morellet,	
and M. Cabanis,	
and love dear Mme.	
Helvétius,	

Adieu. Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

I receiv'd several Productions of the Academy at Auteuil,¹ which gave me great Pleasure.

¹ A humorous allusion to the literary diversions of the merry guests of Madame Helvétius. — ED.

1664. TO WILLIAM HUNTER ¹

Philadelphia, Nov. 24, 1786.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

It rejoiced me much to learn by your kind letter of February last, which I received about ten days since, that you are still in the land of the living, and that you are still at Bath, the very place that I think gives you the best chance of passing the evening of life agreeably. I too am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it 24 years by foreign employments. It is a very good house that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grandchildren about my knees, and an affectionate good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And, after fifty years' public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished; the late reëlection of me to the presidency, notwithstanding the different parties we are split into, being absolutely unanimous. This I tell you, not merely to indulge my own vanity, but because I know you love me, and will be pleased to hear of whatever happens that is agreeable to your friend.

I find Mr. Anstey,² whom you recommend to me, a very agreeable, sensible man, and shall render him any service that may lie in my power. I thank you for the "New Bath Guide."³

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 211. — ED.

² Mr. Anstey was a commissioner sent over by the British government to settle the affairs of the refugees in America. — S.

³ A famous series of letters in rhyme entitled the "New Bath Guide, or Memoirs of the B-r-d [Blunderhead] Family, in a series of Poetical Epistles," by Christopher Anstey (1724-1805). — ED.

I had read it formerly, but it has afforded me fresh pleasure.

Your newspapers, to please honest *John Bull*, paint our situation here in frightful colours, as if we were very miserable since we broke our connexion with him. But I will give you some remarks by which you may form your own judgment. Our husbandmen, who are the bulk of the nation, have had plentiful crops, their produce sells at high prices and for ready, hard money; wheat, for instance, at 8 s., and 8 s. 6 d. per bushel. Our working-people are all employed and get high wages, are well fed and well clad. Our estates in houses are trebled in value by the rising of rents since the Revolution. Buildings in Philadelphia increase amazingly, besides small towns rising in every quarter of the country. The laws govern, justice is well administered, and property as secure as in any country on the globe. Our wilderness lands are daily buying up by new settlers, and our settlements extend rapidly to the westward. European goods were never so cheaply afforded us, as since Britain has no longer the monopoly of supplying us. In short, all among us may be happy, who have happy dispositions; such being necessary to happiness even in Paradise.

I speak these things of Pennsylvania, with which I am most acquainted. As to the other States, when I read in all the papers of the extravagant rejoicings every 4th of July, the day on which was signed the Declaration of Independence, I am convinced, that none of them are discontented with the Revolution. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, with sincere esteem and affection, yours most truly,

B. FRANKLIN.

1665. TO THOMAS WIGHT, JR.¹ (L. C.)Philad^a, Nov. 25. 1786.

SIR: — I received your Letter dated the 3d of September last,² enquiring after John Tyler.³ He is living and in good health, and was here with me a few Days since, but is I believe gone back into the Country where he resides; his Coming to Town being to apply to Government for some Arrears due to him as Armourer to the Troops during the late War. I am glad to hear that Mr. and Mrs. Salt are still in the Land of the Living. My Respects and best Wishes attend them. I shall acquaint Mr. Tyler with what you have mentioned to me of something being left him, and am, sir, your humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1666. TO ——— (L. C.)

Nov. 25, 1786.

DEAR SIR: — I hope your Gout will be of Service to you, as I have always found mine has been to me. I return the Piece. And since you seem to wish for my Advice, tho' without asking it, I will give it. Do not publish the Piece immediately. Let it lie by you at least a Twelvemonth, then reconsider it, and do what you find proper. Such personal public Attacks are never forgiven. You both have Children, and the Ani-

¹ A brandy merchant of Birmingham. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

³ A citizen of Birmingham who had gone to America upon advice and direction of Franklin. Mr. Wight wrote that a certain Mrs. Glover who died on the 22d of July had left some property to the said John Tyler. — ED.

mosity may be entail'd to the Prejudice of both sides. With great Esteem and Affection, I am ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

1667. TO EDWARD BANCROFT (L. C.)

Philad^a, Nov. 26, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of September 5,¹ informing me of the intention Mr. Dilly has of printing a new Edition of my Writings,² and of his Desire, that I would furnish him with such Additions as I may think proper. At present all my Papers and Manuscripts are so mixt with other things, by the Confusions occasioned in sudden and various Removals during the late Troubles, that I can hardly find any thing. But, having nearly finished an Addition to my House, which will afford me Room to put all in Order, I hope soon to be able to comply with such a Request; but I hope Mr. Dilly will have a good Understanding in the Affair with Henry and Johnson, who, having risqu'd the former Impressions, may suppose they thereby acquired some Right in the Copy. As to the *Life* propos'd to be written, if it be by the same hand who furnish'd a Sketch to Dr. Lettsom, which he sent me, I am afraid it will be found too full of Errors for either you or me to correct: And having been persuaded by my Friends, Messrs. Benj^a Vaughan, M. Le Veillard, Mr. James of this Place, and some others, that such a *Life*, written by myself, may be useful to

¹ In A. P. S. — ED.

² "Philosophical and Miscellaneous Papers. Lately Written by B. Franklin, LL.D. London; Printed for C. Dilly in the Poultry, 1787." Charles Dilly (1739-1807) was the publisher of "Tour to the Hebrides" (1780) and the first edition of Boswell's "Life of Johnson" (1791). — ED.

the rising Generation, I have made some Progress in it, and hope to finish it this Winter; so I cannot but wish that Project of Mr. Dilly's Biographer may be laid aside. I am nevertheless thankful to you for your Friendly Offer of correcting it.¹

As to Public Affairs, it is long since I gave over all Expectations of a Commercial Treaty between us and Britain; and I think we can do as well, or better, without one than she can. Our Harvests are plenty, our Produce fetches a high Price in hard Money, and there is in every Part of our Country incontestible Marks of public Felicity. We discover, indeed, some Errors in our general and particular Constitutions; which it is no Wonder they should have, the time in which they were formed being considered. But these we shall mend. The little Disorders you have heard of in some of the States, rais'd by a few wrong Heads, are subsiding, and will probably soon be extinguish'd. My best Wishes, and those of my Family, attend you. We shall be happy to see you here, when it suits you to visit us; being with sincere and great Esteem, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1668. TO CAPTAIN THOMAS DE UGARTA
Y LIANES² (L. C.)

Philad^a, Dec. 16. 1786.

HONOURABLE SIR:—The Council having received Information that the Ship under your Command lies in a dangerous Situation, expos'd to be much injur'd, if not destroy'd,

¹ The biography was omitted. — ED.

² Captain of a Spanish frigate lying at Marcus Hook. — ED.

by the Violence of the driving Ice, have thought that not only the Duty of Hospitality towards Strangers in our Port, but the just Regard due from us to the excellent Prince, your Sovereign, and the good Friend of these States, required of us to afford every Assistance in our Power for her Preservation. And apprehending that possibly your People, accustom'd to warmer Climates, may not be so well acquainted with the Force and mischievous Effects of Ice, and the Methods of guarding against it, we send to you two of the Wardens of the Port, Men of Experience and Knowledge in such Matters, on whose Advice you may rely, and who have Authority to obtain such Aid from the Inhabitants, if any should be wanted, as may enable them to put her in a Position of the greatest possible Safety.

Wishing you every kind of Prosperity, I have the honour to be, Hon^{ble} Sir, your most obedient and most humble Serv^t,

B. FRANKLIN.

1669. TO CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FALCONER (L. C.)

Philad^a, Dec. 16. 1786.

GENTLEMEN:—When you arrive at Marcus Hook you will deliver the Letter to the Captain of the Spanish Man-of-War, and having view'd the Situation of the Ship and the Piers, you will respectfully offer him your Opinion and Advice on the best Means of securing her from Damage by the driving Ice, in Writing if he desires it, and afford every Assistance you can procure, for the Expence of which (if he does not pay it), you will be indemnify'd here.

If you find the Piers likely to be damag'd in case of his

Refusal to follow your Council, you will likely represent *that* to him in Writing, to be made use of hereafter in support of a Complaint to his Court and Demand of Satisfaction, if such a Step should be thought proper. And you will take such prudent Steps as shall occur to you for preventing as far as possible, or lessening such Damage.

You will also inquire into the Truth of the Reports of Injuries done by his People to the Inhabitants, and if you find them true, acquaint him with them, expressing at the same time your Persuasion that he will take Measures to prevent such Injuries for the future.

With sincere Regard, I am, Gentlemen, your humble Serv^t,

B. FRANKLIN.

1670. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹ (L. C.)

Philadelphia, January 25, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

You may remember, that in the correspondence between us in June last, on the Subject of a Million *free gift* of the King of France, acknowledged in our contract to have been received, but which did not appear to be accounted for in our Banker's accounts, unless it should be the same with the million said to be received from the Farmers-General, I mentioned, that an explanation might doubtless be easily obtained by writing to Mr. Grand, or Mr. Jefferson. I know not whether you have accordingly written to either of them; but, being desirous that the matter should be speedily cleared up, I wrote myself to Mr. Grand a letter upon it, of which I now enclose a Copy, with his answers, and several letters

¹ From the Jefferson Papers (L. C.), in the hand of a secretary. — ED.

from M. Durival, who is *Chef du Bureau des Fonds* (and has under his care *la Finance*) *des Affaires Etrangères*.

You will see by these letters that the million in question was delivered to somebody on the 10th of June 1776, but it does not appear to whom. It is clear that it could not be to Mr. Grand nor to the Commissioners from Congress; for we did not meet in France till the end of December 1776, or beginning of January 1777, and that Banker was not charged before with our affairs.

By the Minister's [reserve] in refusing him a Copy of the Receipt, I conjecture it must be money advanced for our use to M. de Beaumarchais, and that it is a *mystère du cabinet*, which perhaps should not be further enquired into, unless necessary to guard against more demands than may be just from that agent: For it may well be supposed, that, if the Court furnished him with the means of supplying us, they may not be willing to furnish authentic proofs of such a transaction so early in our dispute with Britain. Pray tell me, has he dropped his demands, or does he still continue to worry you with them?

I should like to have these original letters returned to me, but you may, if you please, keep Copies of them. It is true the million in question makes no difference in your accounts with the King of France, it not being mentioned or charged, as so much lent and to be repaid, but stated as freely given. Yet if it was put into the Hands of any of your Agents, or Ministers, they ought certainly to account for it. I do not recollect whether Mr. Deane had arrived in France before the 10th of June, 1776;¹ but from his great want of money, when I joined him a few months after, I hardly think it could

¹ Deane did not arrive in Paris till the first week in July. — ED.

have been paid him. Possibly Mr. Jefferson may obtain the information, tho' Mr. Grand could not, and I wish he may be directed to make the enquiry, as I know he would do it directly [discreetly?]; I mean if by Hortalez and Co.'s further demands, or for any other reason, such an enquiry should be thought necessary.¹ I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1671. TO ALEXANDER SMALL (L. C.)

Philad^a, Feb. 19, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your Favour of June last,² and thank you for the kind Congratulations contain'd in it. What you have heard of my Malady is true, "that it does not grow worse." Thanks to God, I still enjoy Pleasure in the Society of my Friends and Books, and much more in the Prosperity of my Country, concerning which your People are continually deceiving themselves.

I am glad the Improvement of the Book of Common Prayer³ has met with your Approbation, and that of good Mrs. Bald-

¹ This matter was not cleared up till 1794, when Gouverneur Morris was American Minister in Paris. By application to the government he procured a copy of the receipt, which had been given by the person who received the million of livres on the 10th of June, 1776. It proved to be Beaumarchais, as Dr. Franklin had conjectured. See Sparks's "Life of Gouverneur Morris," Vol. II, p. 446.

While the correspondence with the banker in Paris was going on, Dr. Franklin's enemies in Congress made themselves busy in propagating a report that he was a defaulter to the amount of one million of livres, and thus gave currency to a most unjust and injurious suspicion against him throughout the country. — S.

² June 6, 1786, in A. P. S. — ED.

³ See the letter to Granville Sharp, July 5, 1785. — ED.

win. It is not yet, that I know of, received in public Practice anywhere; but, as it is said that Good Motions never die, perhaps in time it may be found useful.

I read with Pleasure the Account you gave of the flourishing State of your Commerce and Manufactures, and of the Plenty you have of Resources to carry the Nation thro' all its Difficulties. You have one of the finest Countries in the World, and, if you can be cur'd of the Folly of making War for Trade, (in which Wars more has been always expended than the Profits of any Trade can compensate,) you may make it one of the happiest. Make the best of your own natural Advantages, instead of endeavouring to diminish those of other Nations, and there is no doubt but that you may yet prosper and flourish. Your beginning to consider France no longer as a natural Enemy, is a Mark of Progress in the Good Sense of the Nation, of which Posterity will find the Benefit, in the Rarity of Wars, the Diminution of Taxes, and Increase of Riches.

As to the Refugees, whom you think we were so impolitic in rejecting, I do not find that they are miss'd here, or that anybody regrets their Absence. And certainly they must be happier where they are, under the Government they admire; and be better receiv'd among a People, whose Cause they espous'd and fought for, than among those who cannot so soon have forgotten the Destruction of their Habitations, and the spilt Blood of their dearest Friends and near Relations.

I often think with great Pleasure on the happy Days I pass'd in England with my and your learned and ingenious Friends, who have left us to join the Majority in the World of Spirits. Every one of them now knows more than all of us they have left behind. It is to me a comfortable Reflection,

that, since we must live for ever in a future State, there is a sufficient Stock of Amusement in reserve for us, to be found in constantly learning something new to Eternity, the present Quantity of human Ignorance infinitely exceeding that of human Knowledge. Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me, in whatever World, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his 82^d year.

1672. TO NEVIL MASKELYNE¹

Philadelphia, March 29, 1787.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

The writer of the enclosed paper concerning the variation of the compass, and the important use which he supposes may be made of that variation, not being satisfied with the judgment of some of our principal mathematicians here, has earnestly desired me to communicate it to some of my learned friends in Europe.² I know no one better acquainted with the subject than yourself, and, as I cannot refuse complying with his request, I beg you will excuse my giving you this trouble, and favour me with a line expressing your opinion; which condescension will very much oblige, Sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ First printed by Sparks. — ED.

² The writer here alluded to was John Churchman, who published a work, entitled "The Magnetic Atlas," in which he advanced a new theory of the variation of the compass. — ED.

1673. TO M. LE VEILLARD¹

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

I HAVE received a number of letters from you, which gave me great pleasure, though I have not regularly answered. When you shall consider the situation of a man who had been many years absent from home, the multiplicity of private affairs he must consequently have to settle, the public business of a great government to be attended to, and this under the frequent teasing of a painful disease, you will probably make some charitable allowance for his delay in writing to his friends, and not charge it all as the effect of forgetfulness and want of affection.

I now have all your letters of the last year before me, and shall go through them in order. That of March 25th, announced a M. de la Villele, nephew of the late Madame de la Frété, as intending a voyage hither, but he has not yet appeared in these parts. If he arrives while I live, he will be paid every attention and civility in my power to show him.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken in selling my forte piano and dividing the money as I desired.

The Lodge of the Nine Sisters have done me too much honour in proposing the prize you mention.²

¹ In reply to a letter dated June 1, 1786, in A. P. S. Printed from "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 214. — ED.

² M. le Veillard wrote to Franklin April 2, 1786 (A. P. S.), that he had sold his pianoforte for twelve Louis, and that the Lodge of the Nine Sisters (the Muses) had announced a prize of six hundred francs for a eulogy of Franklin. — ED.

As to the little history I promised you, my purpose still continues of completing it, and I hoped to do it this summer, having built an addition to my house, in which I have placed my library, and where I can write without being disturbed by the noise of the children, but the General Assembly having lately desired my assistance in a great convention to be held here in May next for amending the Federal Constitution, I begin to doubt whether I can make any progress in it till that business is over.

Yours of the 23rd of May did not arrive here till the 5th of October, and this is not the only instance of the long time letters are delayed in your seaports. It is true that we had, as you mention, two parties in this State — one for preserving the Constitution as it is, and the other for adding an Upper House as a check to the Assembly. But having tried it seven years, the strongest party was for continuing it, and since my arrival no obstruction has happened in public business, such as you had been informed of, by the seceding of one party from the Assembly. Having served one year as President of Council, I had not resolution enough to refuse serving another, and was again chosen in November last, without a single dissenting voice but my own. By our laws one cannot serve more than three years, but I think I shall decline the third.

I am quite of your opinion that our independence is not quite complete till we have discharged our public debt. This State is not behindhand in its proportion, and those who are in arrear are actually employed in contriving means to discharge their respective balances, but they are not all equally diligent in business, nor equally successful; the whole will, however, be paid, I am persuaded, in a few years.

The English have not yet delivered up the posts on our frontier, agreeable to treaty; the pretence is that our merchants have not paid their debts. I was a little provoked when I first heard this, and I wrote some remarks upon it which I send you.¹ They have been written near a year, but I have not yet published them, being unwilling to encourage any of our people who may be able to pay in their neglect of that duty. This paper, therefore, is only for your amusement and that of our excellent friend, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.²

You blame me for writing three pamphlets and neglecting to write the little history; you should consider they were written at sea, out of my own head; the other could not so well be written there for want of the documents that could only be had here.

As to my malady, concerning which you so kindly inquire, I have never had the least doubt of its being the stone. I am sensible that it is grown heavier; but on the whole it does not give me more pain than when at Passy, and except in standing, walking, or making water, I am very little incommoded by it. Sitting or lying in bed I am generally quite easy, God be thanked; and as I live temperately, drink no wine, and use daily the exercise of the dumb-bell, I flatter myself that the stone is kept from augmenting so much as it might otherwise do, and that I may still continue to find it tolerable. People who live long, who will drink of the cup of life to the very bottom, must expect to meet with some of the usual dregs, and when I reflect on the number of terrible maladies human

¹ See "The Retort Courteous." — ED.

² The following was written in the margin: —

"This omitted at present for want of time to copy it." — B.

nature is subject to, I think myself favoured in having to my share only the stone and the gout.

In yours of August 21st, you mention your having written the 21st and 29th of June, which letters were in a paquet, with one from the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, two from M. and Mad. Brillon, etc. I have not been so happy as to receive these letters; they never came to hand.

You were right in conjecturing that I wrote the remarks on the "Thoughts concerning Executive Justice." I have no copy of those remarks at hand, and forget how the saying was introduced that it was better one thousand guilty persons should escape than one innocent suffer. Your criticisms thereon appear to be just, and I imagine you may have misapprehended my intention in mentioning it. I always thought, with you, that the prejudice in Europe which supposes a family dishonoured by the punishment of one of its members was very absurd, it being, on the contrary, my opinion that a rogue hanged out of a family does it more honour than ten that live in it.

What you mention of our paper money, if you mean that of this State, Pennsylvania, is not well understood. It was made before my arrival, and not being a legal tender can do no injustice to anybody, nor does any one here complain of it, though many are justly averse to an increase of the quantity at this time, there being a great deal of real money in the country, and one bank in good credit. I have myself purchased ten ACTIONS in it, which, at least, shows my good opinion of it.

Besides the addition to my house, mentioned above, I have been building two new houses on my front, next the street. They are of brick, and each twenty-four feet wide by forty-five deep, and three stories high. The affairs in dealing with

so many workmen and furnishers of materials, such as bricklayers, carpenters, stone-cutters, painters, glaziers, lime-burners, timber-merchants, copper-smiths, carters, labourers, etc., etc., have added not a little to the fatiguing business I have gone through in the last year, as mentioned above, and strengthen in some degree my apology for being so bad a correspondent.

Mr. Brabazon has requested me to send him some seeds in time to plant this spring, but his letter came to hand too late. They will be got the ensuing autumn and sent, so as to be ready for planting next year.

Temple and Benjamin will write to you. This letter goes by Mr. Paine, one of our principal writers at the Revolution, being the author of "Common Sense" a pamphlet that had prodigious effects.

He does not speak French, or I should recommend him to your civilities, as I do to those of our friend, the good Duke.

The last letter I have had the pleasure of receiving from you is that of Nov. 19, 1786. I cannot give you a better idea of my present happiness in my family than in telling you that my daughter has all the virtues of a certain good lady that you allow me to love; the same tender affections and intentions, ingenuity, industry, economy, etc., etc., etc. Embrace that good dame for me warmly, and the amiable daughter. My best wishes attend the whole family, whom I shall never cease to love while I am

B. FRANKLIN.

1674. *TO THE DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD* ¹

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

I HAVE been happy in receiving three very kind letters from my greatly respected and esteemed friend, since my being in America. They are dated November 30th, 1785, February 8th, 1786, and January 14th, 1787.² In mine of this date to M. le Veillard, I have made the best apology I could for my being so bad a correspondent. I will not trouble you with a repetition of it, as I know you often see him. I will only confess my fault, and trust to your candour and goodness for my pardon.

Your friendly congratulations on my arrival and reception here were very obliging. The latter was, as you have heard, extremely flattering. The two parties in the Assembly and Council, the constitutionists and anti-constitutionists, joined in requesting my service as counsellor, and afterwards in electing me as President. Of seventy-four members in Council and Assembly, who voted by ballot, there was in my first election but one negative, besides my own; and in the second, after a year's service, only my own. And I experience, from all the principal people in the government, every attention and assistance that can be desired towards making the task as little burdensome to me as possible. So I am going on very comfortably hitherto with my second year, and I do not at present see any likelihood of a change; but future events are always uncertain, being governed by Providence or sub-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 216. — ED.

² All but January 14, 1787, are in A. P. S. — ED.

ject to chances; and popular favour is very precarious, being sometimes *lost* as well as *gained* by good actions; so I do not depend on a continuance of my present happiness, and therefore shall not be surprised, if, before my time of service expires, something should happen to diminish it.

These States in general enjoy peace and plenty. There have been some disorders in the Massachusetts and Rhode Island governments; those in the former are quelled for the present; those of the latter, being contentions for and against paper money, will probably continue some time. Maryland too is divided on the same subject, the Assembly being for it, and the Senate against it. Each is now employed in endeavouring to gain the people to its party against the next elections, and it is probable the Assembly may prevail. Paper money in moderate quantities has been found beneficial; when more than the occasions of commerce require, it depreciated and was mischievous; and the populace are apt to demand more than is necessary. In this State we have some, and it is useful, and I do not hear any clamour for more.

There seems to be but little thought at present in the particular States, of mending their particular constitutions; but the grand Federal Constitution¹ is generally blamed as not having given sufficient powers to Congress, the federal head. A convention is therefore appointed to revise that constitution, and propose a better. You will see by the enclosed paper, that your friend is to be one in that business, though he doubts his malady may not permit his giving constant attendance. I am glad to see, that you are named as one of a General Assembly to be convened in France. I flatter myself, that great good may accrue to that dear

¹ The Old Confederation. — ED.

nation from the deliberations of such an assembly. I pray God to give it his blessing.

I sympathize with you and the family most sincerely, in the great loss sustained by the decease of that excellent woman.¹ It must be indeed a heavy one. My best wishes attend those that remain, and that the happiness of your sweet domestic society may long continue without such another interruption.

I send herewith a volume of the Transactions of our Philosophical Society for you, another for M. de Condorcet, and a third for the Academy. The war had interrupted our attempts to improve ourselves in scientific matters, but we now begin to resume them.

The bearer of this is Mr. Paine, the author of a famous piece, entitled "Common Sense," published here with great effect on the minds of the people at the beginning of the Revolution. He is an ingenious, honest man; and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. He carries with him the model of a bridge of a new construction, his own invention, concerning which I intended to have recommended him to M. Peyronnet,² but I hear he is no more. You can easily procure Mr. Paine a sight of the models and drawings of the

¹ The Duchess d'Enville, mother of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. — W. T. F.

² Jean-Rodolphe Perronet (1708-1794), a famous designer of bridges. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences and a fellow of the Royal Society. In the hall of the Royal Society his bust is placed next to that of Franklin. Paine wrote to Franklin, June 22, 1787 (A. P. S.): "Your old friend M. Perinet [sic], the Bridge Architect is yet living. I was introduced to him by M. Le Roi. He has taken a Residence in the Elysian Fields, for the purpose of being near the works. He has invited me to see his House at Paris where all his drawings and Models are." Speaking of Franklin's friends in Paris, Paine said in the same letter, "My reception here in consequence of them [Franklin's letters of introduction] has been abundantly cordial and friendly. I have received visits and invitations from all who were in Town. The Duke

collection appertaining to the *Ponts et Chaussées*; they must afford him useful lights on the subject. We want a bridge over our river Schuylkill, and have no artist here regularly bred to that kind of architecture.

My grandsons are very sensible of the honour of your remembrance, and desire me to present their respects. With the most sincere and perfect esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1675. TO COMTE D'ESTAING ¹ (L. C.)

Philad^a, April, 15, 1787.

DEAR SIR:—When I receiv'd the two Letters you did me the honour of writing to me last Year, I was made to hope for the great Pleasure of soon receiving you here, in your Way to Georgia. That Event would have made me very happy. I should have had an Opportunity of showing some Marks of the Respect I bear and always shall for the generous Warrior, who fought and bled in the Cause of Liberty and my Country.² The Assembly of that State has

de Rochefoucauld & General Chastellux are in the Country. I dined yesterday with an old Friend of yours M. Malesherbes who is of the new Council of finances; and who received me with an Heartiness of friendship. It must have been a very strong attachment to America that drew you from this Country for your friends are very numerous and very affectionate.

"M. Le Roi has been most attentively kind to me. As he speaks English there is scarcely a day pass without an interview. He took me a few days ago to see an old friend of yours M. Buffon. But we were informed by the servant that he was very ill, and under the operation of Medicine." — ED.

¹ Charles Hector-Theodat, Comte d'Estaing (1729-1794), naval officer. — ED.

² D'Estaing was severely wounded, October 9, 1779, in an attack upon Savannah. — ED.

granted me 3,000 Acres of their Land to be located where I can find any Vacant. I wish much that it might be near yours: For you contriv'd to make your Neighbourhood so agreeable to me at Passy, that I could wish to be your Neighbour everywhere.

M. du Plessis staid here but a few Days. I should have been glad of any Occasion of being serviceable to him on your Account.

The Bearer of this is Mr. Paine Author of the celebrated Pamphlet, "Common Sense," by which the Revolution was greatly forwarded: He must be known to you by Reputation. Will you permit me to recommend him as a Friend of mine to those Civilities you have so much Pleasure in showing to Strangers of Merit.

With sincere and great Esteem and Respect, I am ever,
Dear Sir, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN.

1676. TO THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLUX¹

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

Your most pleasing letter, accompanied by the invaluable present of your Journal,² and translation of Colonel Humphreys's poem,³ came to hand but lately, though dated in June last. I believe they have been in the West Indies. They have given me a great deal of pleasure in the perusal, as every

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 219. — ED.

² "Voyages dans l'Amérique Septentrionale dans les Années 1780, 81 et 82." Paris, 1786. — ED.

³ Discours en vers, adressé aux . . . soldats des . . . Armées Américaines, 1786 (in French prose). — ED.

thing of yours always did. The portrait you have made of our country and people is what in painting is called a *handsome likeness*, for which we are much obliged to you. We shall be the better for it, if we endeavour to merit what you kindly say in our favour, and to correct what you justly censure. I am told the Journal is translated into English, and printed in one of the States, I know not which, not having seen the translation.

The newspapers tell us, that you are about to have an Assembly of Notables, to consult on improvements of your government. It is somewhat singular, that we should be engaged in the same project here at the same time; but so it is, and a convention for the purpose of revising and amending our federal constitution is to meet at this place next month. I hope both assemblies will be blessed with success, and that their deliberations and counsels may promote the happiness of both nations.

In the State of Pennsylvania, government, notwithstanding our parties, goes on at present very smoothly, so that I have much less trouble in my station than was expected. Massachusetts has lately been disturbed by some disorderly people; but they are now quelled. The rest of the States go on pretty well, except some dissensions in Rhode Island and Maryland respecting paper money. Mr. Paine, whom you know, and who undertakes to deliver this letter to you, can give you full information of our affairs, and therefore I need not enlarge upon them. I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. I have fulfilled all your commissions to the ladies here, who are much flattered by your kind remembrance of them. My family join in every sentiment of esteem and respect with, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1677. TO MESSRS. THE ABBÉS CHALUT AND
ARNAUD¹

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Your reflections on our situation, compared with that of many nations of Europe, are very sensible and just. Let me add, that only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.

Our public affairs go on as well as can reasonably be expected, after so great an overturning. We have had some disorders in different parts of the country, but we arrange them as they arise, and are daily mending and improving; so that I have no doubt but all will come right in time. Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

1678. TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE²

Philadelphia, April 17, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND,

I received the kind letter you did me the honour of writing, in February, 1786.³ The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth; but, as I have

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 220. The letter is a reply to one from the Abbés, dated "Paris 9 Decembre 1786." — ED.

² From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 221. — ED.

³ February 10, 1786 : in A. P. S. — ED.

always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value; among which I reckon that of the Marquis de la Fayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage, and I know it is always at work and indefatigable. Our enemies are, as you observe, very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination; because I would do nothing that might hasten another quarrel by exasperating those, who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best, that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength, which, since the peace, does really make rapid progress, and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans, who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising; rather, considering the times, and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in the general confederating articles are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of

particular States will undoubtedly be rectified, as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And, whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings, with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the Revolution and its grand principles.

I enclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese and Delaware languages, which Colonel Harmar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at his estate in the Jerseys, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public employment, for I think agriculture the most honourable, because the most independent, of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family, who are much flattered by your remembrance of them, in best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds, and children, and prays God to bless them all. Adieu; and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1679. TO JEAN-BAPTISTE LE ROY¹

Philadelphia, April 18, 1787.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND:—I believe I have not written to you since I received your kind letter of July 26,² and October 9, 1786. Such has been my continual occupation in public and private business, having the building of three houses upon my hands, that I had no time left for philosophical correspondence. I now take up my pen with the honest resolution of paying off some of my debts.

You mention that M. de Buffon *avoit des douleurs semblables aux miennes*. I sympathize with him. Let me know in your next how he does. I do not understand these dispensations of Providence, though probably they are for the best. But it seems to me that if you or I had the disposition of good and evil in this world, so excellent a man would not have an hour's pain during his existence.

Your account of the progress made in the art of ballooning, by the acquisition of a tight envelope and the means of descending and rising without throwing out ballast, or letting out air, is very pleasing. I am sorry the artists at Javelle do not continue their experiments. I always thought they were in the likeliest way of making improvements, as they were remote from interruption in their experiments. I had sometimes wished I had brought with me from France a balloon sufficiently large to raise me from the ground. In my malady it would have been the most easy carriage for me,

¹ From "The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin" (Bigelow), Vol. IX, p. 377.—ED.

² In A. P. S.—ED.

being led by a string held by a man walking on the ground. I should be glad to have Mr. Meunier's work. Pray let Mr. Grand know where he may buy it for me.

It gives me pleasure to hear of the success attending the conductors at Brest and at Dijon. Time will bring them more into use, and of course make them more useful.

It is a curious fact, that of the death of so many pigeons by lightning without disturbing their position. Pray when you see M. de Malesherbes,¹ present to him my respects. He is one of the most respectable characters of this age.

Believe me ever, my dear friend, with the sincerest esteem and respect, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1680. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON² (L. C.)

Philad^a, April 19, 1787.

DEAR SIR:— I have lately received your Favour of Dec. 23. The Diplomas I hope are got to hand before this time. I am much oblig'd by your taking care of my "Encyclopedie." Mr. Hopkinson will account with you for it.

I am glad to learn that everything is quiet in Europe, and like to continue so. I hope the same will be the case here; tho' Boutdefeus are not wanting among us, who by inflammatory Writings in the Papers are perpetually endeavouring to set us together by the Ears about Taxes, and Certificates, etc. The Insurgents in the Massachusetts are quelled,

¹ Chrétien-Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes (1721-1794), French statesman, President of the Cour des Aides. — ED.

² A press copy of this letter is in the Stevens Collection (L. C.). The original letter is in the Jefferson Papers, Vol. 33, No. 23, Series 2. — ED.

and I believe a great Majority of that People approve the Measures of Government in reducing them. Yet I see that in the late Election they have left out the late Governor and chosen Mr. Hancock. But he was always more popular than Mr. Bowdoin, had resign'd on Acct of his Infirmities, and his Health being mended, his Friends have taken advantage of the Offence given by Mr. Bowdoin to the Malcontents, to increase the Number of Votes against him. His refusing the Bill for reducing the governor's Salary has also, I imagine, hurt his Interest at this Election. So that upon the whole I do not think his not being chosen any Proof of general Dissatisfaction with the Measures taken to suppress the Rebellion, or with the Constitution.

Our Federal Constitution is generally thought defective, and a Convention, first propos'd by Virginia, and since recommended by Congress, is to assemble here next Month, to revise it and propose Amendments. The Delegates generally appointed, as far as I have heard of them, are Men of Character for Prudence and Ability, so that I hope Good from their Meeting. Indeed if it does not do Good it must do Harm, as it will show that we have not Wisdom enough among us to govern ourselves; and will strengthen the Opinion of some Political Writers, that popular Governments cannot long support themselves.

I am sorry for the Death of M. Peyronet on Acct of Mr. Paine, who would have been pleas'd and instructed by conferring with that ingenious and skilful Artist on the Subject of his Bridge, and it was my Intention to introduce him to M. Peyronet's Acquaintance. I have requested the Duke de Rochefoucauld to procure him a Sight of the Models and Drafts in the Repository of the Ponts et Chaussées. You

are well acquainted with Mr. Paine's Merit, and need no Request of mine to serve him in his Views, and introduce him where it may be proper, and of Advantage to him.

With great and sincere Esteem I have the honour to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant,
B. FRANKLIN.

1681. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad^a, April 22, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND:— I received in its time your Favour of Sept 9, and approve of your Reason for not adding the 1161 livres to the Credit of my Account. What related to the Million was also very satisfactory.

Yours of Dec. 28 and Feb. 7 are just come to hand, together with my Account for the year 1786, which appears to be right. I observe you have sold all my Actions in the *caisse d'Es-compte*; and tho' I have no longer any concern in that Fund, I rejoice to hear of its Prosperity. The Classics and other Books are not come to hand, but Mr. Jefferson will take care to send them. Those you sent by Mr. Franks are received.

Your Mention of the Malady of M. de Vergennes afflicted me, and much more the News I since hear of his Death. So wise and so good a Man taken away from the Station he fill'd, is a great Loss not only to France, but to Europe in general, to America, and to Mankind.

Not having found the Cares of Government so burthensome as I apprehended, I consented to serve a second Year, and was chosen unanimously by the Junction of all Parties, so that there was but one Negative Voice, viz., my own, and that given,

as you may suppose for Modesty's sake. The three Houses which I began to build last year, are nearly finished, and I am now about to begin two others. Building is an old Man's Amusement. The Advantage is for his Posterity. Since my coming home, the Market is extended before my Ground next the Street, and the high Rents such a Situation must afford, has been one of my Inducements.

As often as my Drafts may be presented to you, exceeding my Cash in your hands, I hereby desire you will furnish yourself by immediately disposing of some of my Stock in the public Funds.

For the best Room, in the Addition I have made to my Dwelling-House, I want a Mirror measuring $59\frac{1}{2}$ French Inches long, and 43 Inches wide, and I request you will send me such a one. As the Pacquet Boat is henceforth to sail from Havre, it will be easier to have things from Paris than formerly. No Frame is to be with it, as it is to be fix'd over the Chimney.

I continue, Thanks to God, in good Health. Please to remember me kindly to all my old Acquaintance who do me the honour to enquire after me. My Grandsons and the rest of my Family join me in best Wishes of Health and Happiness to you and yours, and I am ever, with great and sincere Esteem, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. — I have desired Madame Helvétius to execute a little Commission for my Daughter. If she does it, I request you would pay the Bills.

1682. TO ABBÉ MORELLET¹

Philadelphia, April 22, 1787.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I received, though long after they were written, your very agreeable favours of October 30th, 1785, and February 9th, 1786,² with the pieces enclosed, productions of the Auteuil³ *Academy of Belles Lettres*. Your kind and friendly wishes and congratulations are extremely obliging. It gives me an infinite pleasure to find, that I still retain a favourable place in the remembrance of the worthy and the good, whose delightful and instructive society I had the happiness of enjoying while I resided in France.

But, though I could not leave that dear nation without regret, I certainly did right in coming home. I am here in my *niche* in my own house, in the bosom of my family, my daughter and grandchildren all about me, among my old friends, or the sons of my friends, who equally respect me; and who all speak and understand the same language with me; and you know, that, if a man desires to be useful by the exercise of his mental faculties, he loses half their force when in a foreign country, where he can only express himself in a language with which he is not well acquainted. In short, I enjoy here every opportunity of doing good, and every thing else I could wish for, except repose; and that I may soon

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 223. — ED.

² See "Memoires de l'Abbé Morellet," Tom. I, p. 298. — ED.

³ The residence of Madame Helvétius, with whom the Abbé Morellet, Cabanis, La Roche, and other literary friends passed much of their time. — W. T. F.

expect, either by the cessation of my office, which cannot last more than three years, or by ceasing to live.

I am of the same opinion with you, respecting the freedom of commerce, especially in countries where direct taxes are practicable. This will be our case in time, when our wide-extended country fills up with inhabitants. But at present they are so widely settled, often five or six miles distant from one another in the back country, that the collection of a direct tax is almost impossible the trouble of the collectors' going from house to house amounting to more than the value of the tax. Nothing can be better expressed than your sentiments are on this point, where you prefer liberty of trading, cultivating, manufacturing, &c., even to civil liberty, this being affected but rarely, the other every hour. Our debt occasioned by the war being heavy, we are under the necessity of using imposts, and every method we can think of, to assist in raising a revenue to discharge it; but in sentiment we are well disposed to abolish duties on importation, as soon as we possibly can afford to do so.

Whatever may be reported by the English in Europe, you may be assured, that our people are almost unanimous in being satisfied with the Revolution. Their unbounded respect for all who were principally concerned in it, whether as warriors or statesmen, and the enthusiastic joy with which the day of the declaration of independence is everywhere annually celebrated, are indubitable proofs of this truth. In one or two of the States there have been some discontents on partial and local subjects; these may have been fomented, as the accounts of them are exaggerated, by our ancient enemies; but they are now nearly suppressed, and the rest of the States enjoy peace and good order, and flourish amaz-

ingly. The crops have been good for several years past, the price of country produce high, from foreign demand, and it fetches ready money; rents are high in our towns, which increase fast by new buildings; labourers and artisans have high wages well paid, and vast tracts of new land are continually clearing and rendered fit for cultivation.

The pains you have taken to translate the congratulatory addresses, which I received on my arrival, is a fresh proof of the continuance of your friendship for me, which has afforded me as much satisfaction as the addresses themselves, and you will readily believe, that for me this is not saying little; for this welcome of my fellow citizens has far surpassed my hopes. Popular favour, not the most constant thing in the world, stands by me. My election to the presidency for the second year was unanimous. Will this disposition continue the same for the third? Nothing is more doubtful. A man, who holds a high office, finds himself so often exposed to the danger of disobliging some one in the fulfilment of his duty, that the resentment of those, whom he has thus offended, being greater than the gratitude of those whom he has served, it almost always happens, that, while he is violently attacked, he is feebly defended. You will not be surprised, then, if you learn, that I have not closed my political career with the same *éclat*, with which it commenced.

I am sorry for what you tell me of the indisposition you have experienced. I sometimes wonder, that Providence does not protect the good from all evil and from every suffering. This should be so in the best of worlds; and, since it is not so, I am piously led to believe, that, if our world is not indeed the best, we must lay the blame on the bad quality

of the materials of which it is made. I am, my dear friend,
with sincere esteem, and affection, ever yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

1683. TO FRANCIS CHILDS (A. P. S.)

Philad^a. May 8. 1787.

SIR,

Your Papers do not come here regularly. I have not received any of them for some Weeks past. I am glad however to hear from you that it is well established, and likely to be profitable.

You are always complaining of Imperfections in the Founts, which I suppose to proceed from your not having right Ideas of that Matter. They were all cast after the best Rules of the Foundries in England, and in the same Proportions. But as the Stiles of Authors vary, and different Subjects use the different Sorts variously, there never could be a Fount so proportioned as to run out equally in all cases. And if whenever, in any Work, four or five Sorts run short, you cast for the Deficiency, in a subsequent Work those Sorts may be superabundant, and all the rest will appear deficient, so that there will be no End of proceeding in that Manner. Therefore it is, that Printers have usually to every large Fount what they call a *Bomcase*, or Fount Case, that is, a Case with larger Divisions, and deeper than the common Cases, to hold those Sorts that are superfluous in one kind of Work, and where they may be found when wanting in another. You remark that your now demanding more of sundry Sorts (after being supply'd with all you formerly thought wanting) is owing partly to your not taking an accurate List of the Imperfec-

tions at first: and I am persuaded that the present List you have sent me is far from being accurate, since it is in Pounds weight, and not in the Number of Letters. This lumping Method of calling for Sorts to supply supposed Imperfections, 5^{lb} of m's 3^{lb} of s's etc, etc, can never be accurate; and in this Instance of the Petit Romain, you may see already the Effect of such Inaccuracy, viz, to augment instead of diminishing the Imperfections of a Fount; for at first you wanted but 4 or 5 Sorts of the lower Case, and now you want 15 or 16, which is a great Part of the four & twenty, and proves what I have said above that there can be no End of going on in this Way. — However, to oblige you, tho' it is much more Trouble as the Mold must be adjusted afresh for every little Parcel, you shall have the Sorts you want if you send a List of them in Numbers. My Grandson¹ will cast them, as soon as he has taken his Degree and got clear of the College; for then he purposes to apply himself closely to the Business of Letter founding and this is expected in July next. You shall also have some W's of a better form for the Pica as you desire. — And I will willingly receive the Petit Canon again which you propose to return. By the way, I do not know whether I have a perfect Account of what you have returned, and I wish you would send it to me, I am ever,

Your assured Friend &c.

[B. F.]

¹ Benjamin Franklin Bache. — ED.

1684. TO THOMAS JORDAN¹

Philadelphia, May 18, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind letter of February 27th,² together with the cask of porter you have been so good as to send me. We have here at present what the French call *une assemblée des notables*, a convention composed of some of the principal people from the several States of our confederation. They did me the honor of dining with me last Wednesday, when the cask was broached, and its contents met with the most cordial reception and universal approbation. In short, the company agreed unanimously, that it was the best porter they had ever tasted. Accept my thanks, a poor return, but all I can make at present.

Your letter reminds me of many happy days we have passed together, and the dear friends with whom we passed them; some of whom, alas! have left us, and we must regret their loss, although our Hawkesworth is become an *Adventurer*³ in more happy regions; and our Stanley⁴ gone, "where only his own *harmony* can be exceeded." You give me joy in telling me, that you are "on the pinnacle of *content*." Without it no situation can be happy; with it, any. One means of becoming content with one's situation is the com-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 225. Thomas Jordan was a London brewer. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

³ In allusion to the "Adventurer," by John Hawkesworth (1715-1773), compiler of the account of the Discoveries made in the South Seas by Captain Cook. — ED.

⁴ John Stanley, an eminent musician and composer, became blind at the age of two years. — W. T. F.

paring it with a worse. Thus, when I consider how many terrible diseases the human body is liable to, I comfort myself, that only three incurable ones have fallen to my share, viz. the gout, the stone, and old age; and that these have not yet deprived me of my natural cheerfulness, my delight in books, and enjoyment of social conversation.

I am glad to hear, that Mr. Fitzmaurice¹ is married, and has an amiable lady and children.² It is a better plan than that he once proposed, of getting Mrs. Wright to make him a wax-work wife to sit at the head of his table. For after all, wedlock is the natural state of man. A bachelor is not a complete human being. He is like the odd half of a pair of scissors, which has not yet found its fellow, and therefore is not even half so useful as they might be together.

I hardly know which to admire most; the wonderful discoveries made by Herschel,³ or the indefatigable ingenuity by which he has been enabled to make them. Let us hope, my friend, that, when free from these bodily embarrassments, we may roam together through some of the systems he has explored, conducted by some of our old companions already acquainted with them. Hawkesworth will enliven our progress with his cheerful, sensible converse, and Stanley accompany the music of the spheres.

Mr. Watmaugh⁴ tells me, for I immediately inquired after her, that your daughter is alive and well. I remember her

¹ The Honourable Fitzmaurice was settled in Wales in the Vale of Clwydd, where he employed himself bleaching linen manufactured on his estate in Ireland. — ED.

² He had one son. — ED.

³ The discovery of the two satellites of Georgium Sidus. — ED.

⁴ Mr. Watmaugh brought the cask of porter from England to Philadelphia. — ED.

a most promising and beautiful child, and therefore do not wonder, that she is grown, as he says, a fine woman. God bless her and you, my dear friend, and every thing that pertains to you, is the sincere prayer of yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

in his eighty-second year.

1685. TO WILLIAM HERSCHELL ¹ (H.)

Philad. May 18, 1787.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 18th of Feb. past, together with your Catalogue of 1000 new nebulae and Clusters of Stars, which I immediately communicated to our Philosophical Society, who return their thanks, and congratulate you cordially on your important new Discovery of the two Satellites revolving round the Georgian planet.

You have wonderfully extended the Power of human Vision, and are daily making us Acquainted with Regions of the Universe totally unknown to mankind in former Ages. Had Fortune place'd you in this part of America, your Progress in these Discoveries might have been still more rapid, as from the more frequent clearness of our Air, we have near one Third more in the year of good observing Days than there are in England. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ In the Sparks papers at Harvard University, endorsed by Jared Sparks "sent by Charles Sumner from Vienna. Rec'd March 3^d 1840." It came too late to be published by Sparks. — ED.

1686. TO JOHN ADAMS (M. H. S.)

Philad^a May 18, 1787.

SIR

I received by D^r White the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 27th of January, together with two copies of your Defence of the American Constitutions, one for myself for which I beg you would accept my Thanks, the other for the Philosophical Society whose Secretary will of course officially acknowledge the Obligation. That work is in such Request here, that it is already put to Press, and a numerous Edition will speedily be abroad. My son Beach and my Grandson are much flatter'd by your Remembrance of them and join in presenting their Respects. Be pleased to offer mine to M^{rs} Adams and your amiable daughter.

With great Esteem I have the honour to be,

Your most obedient

and most humble Servant

Sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

1687. TO RICHARD PRICE¹ (P. C.)

Philada, May 18, 1787.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received your favour of Jan. 26² with the volume of Sermons, for which please to accept my thanks. I have read them with great pleasure, and I think no one can read them without improvement.

¹ From a copy in M. H. S. The original is in the possession of Mr. Walter Ashburner, of London. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

I condole with you on the loss of that excellent woman, so long your pleasing companion.¹ The being depriv'd of dear friends and relations one after another, is a very severe tax we pay for living a great while ourselves. But such is the miserable state of things in this period of our existence; the rectification is only to be expected in that which is to come.

My health continues as when Mrs. Vaughan left us. My malady does not grow perceptibly worse, and I hope may continue tolerable to my life's end, which cannot now be far distant, being in my 82^d year.

On farther consideration of my scheme for sinking the national debt, I became so doubtful of it as not to venture exposing it to Baron Maseres. I must digest it a little better.

We have now meeting here a Convention of the principal people in the several States, for the purpose of revising the federal Constitution, and proposing such amendments as shall be thoroughly necessary. It is a most important business, and I hope will be attended with success.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend

Yours most affectionately.

B. FRANKLIN.

If you have not receiv'd the Vol. of our Transactions I will send you another.

¹ Mrs. Price died of palsy in September, 1786. — ED.

1688. TO GEORGE WHATLEY ¹

Philadelphia, May 18, 1787.

I RECEIVED duly my good old friend's letter of the 19th ² of February. I thank you much for your notes on banks; they are just and solid, as far as I can judge of them. Our bank here has met with great opposition, partly from envy, and partly from those who wish an emission of more paper money, which they think the bank influence prevents. But it has stood all attacks, and went on well, notwithstanding the Assembly repealed its charter. A new Assembly has restored it; and the management is so prudent, that I have no doubt of its continuing to go on well. The dividend has never been less than six per cent, nor will that be augmented for some time, as the surplus profit is reserved to face accidents. The dividend of eleven per cent, which was once made, was from a circumstance scarce avoidable. A new company was proposed; and prevented only by admitting a number of new partners. As many of the first set were averse to this, and chose to withdraw, it was necessary to settle their accounts; so all were adjusted, the profits shared that had been accumulated, and the new and old proprietors jointly began on a new and equal footing. Their notes are always instantly paid on demand, and pass on all occasions as readily as silver, because they will always produce silver.

Your medallion is in good company; it is placed with those of Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Marquis of Rock-

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 227. — ED.

² This should be 12th of February. The letter is in A. P. S. — ED.

ingham, Sir George Saville, and some others, who honoured me with a show of friendly regard, when in England. I believe I have thanked you for it, but I thank you again.

I believe, with you, that if our Plenipo is desirous of concluding a treaty of commerce, he may need patience. If I were in his place, and not otherwise instructed, I should be apt to say, "Take your own time, gentlemen. If the treaty cannot be made as much to your advantage as to ours, don't make it. I am sure the want of it is not more to our disadvantage than to yours. Let the merchants on both sides treat with one another. *Laissez-les faire.*"

I have never considered attentively the Congress's scheme for coining, and I have it not now at hand, so that at present I can say nothing to it. The chief uses of coining seem to be the ascertaining the fineness of the metals, and saving the time that would otherwise be spent in weighing to ascertain the quality. But the convenience of fixed values to pieces is so great, as to force the currency of some whose stamp is worn off, that should have assured their fineness, and which are evidently not of half their due weight; the case at present with the sixpences in England; which, one with another, do not weight threepence.

You are now seventy-eight, and I am eighty-two; you tread fast upon my heels; but, though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth, and I now often hear persons whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such-a-one, to distinguish them from their sons now men grown and in business; so that, by living twelve years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity,

when I ought to have been abed and asleep. Yet, had I gone at seventy, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed too in matters of the greatest importance; but whether I have been doing good or mischief is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Riley.¹ I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to know, that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point; for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation. I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1689. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a, May 30, 1787.

DEAR SISTER: — In your Letter of March 9, you mention that you wanted to know all about my Buildings. To the East End of my Dwelling-House I have made an Addition of 16 Feet and an half wide and 33 feet long, that is the whole Length of the old House, so that the Front and Back of the old and new Building range even, and the Row of Windows, Eaves, and Roof are continu'd so as to appear but one Building. By this Addition I have gain'd a large Cellar for Wood, a Drawing-Room or Dining-Room on the same Level with

¹ The name is written *Rowley* in Mr. Whatley's letter. Possibly it is Dr. William Rowley who wrote a book upon Gout, in 1780. — ED.

our old Dining-Room, in which new Room we can dine a Company of 24 Persons, it being 16 feet wide and $30\frac{1}{2}$ long; and it has 2 Windows at each End, the North and South, which will make it an airy Summer Room; and for Winter there is a good Chimney in the Middle, made handsome with marble Slabs. Over this Room is my Library, of the same Dimensions, with like Windows at each End, and lin'd with Books to the Cieling. Over this are 2 lodging-Rooms: and over all a fine Garret. The Way into the Lower Room is out of the Entry passing by the Foot of the Stairs. Into the Library I go thro' one of the Closets of the old Drawing-Room or Bed-Chamber. And into the two new Rooms above thro' a Passage cut off from the Nursery. All these Rooms are now finished and inhabited, very much to the Convenience of the Family, who were before too much crowded.

The two new Houses next the Street are three Stories high, besides the Garrets, and an arch'd Passage is left in the middle between them to come thro' down to my Dwelling, wide enough for a Carriage; so that I have the old Passage Lot left free to build another House. The two Houses are 24 feet front each, and 45 deep. We are all well, and join in Love to you and yours. I am ever, your affectionate Brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1690. SPEECH IN THE CONVENTION;

ON THE SUBJECT OF SALARIES¹ (L. C.)

SIR,

It is with Reluctance that I rise to express a Disapprobation of any one Article of the Plan, for which we are so much

¹ This speech was delivered June 2, 1787. It is from an auto. draft in L. C. — ED.

obliged to the honourable Gentleman who laid it before us. From its first Reading, I have borne a good Will to it, and, in general, wish'd it Success. In this Particular of Salaries to the Executive Branch, I happen to differ; and, as my Opinion may appear new and chimerical, it is only from a Persuasion that it is right, and from a Sense of Duty, that I hazard it. "The Committee will judge of my Reasons when they have heard them, and their judgment may possibly change mine. I think I see Inconveniences in the Appointment of Salaries; I see none in refusing them, but on the contrary great Advantages.

Sir, there are two Passions which have a powerful Influence in the Affairs of Men. These are *Ambition* and *Avarice*; the Love of Power and the Love of Money. Separately, each of these has great Force in prompting Men to Action; but when united in View of the same Object, they have in many Minds the most violent Effects. Place before the Eyes of such Men a Post of *Honour*, that shall at the same time be a Place of *Profit*, and they will move Heaven and Earth to obtain it. The vast Number of such Places it is that renders the British Government so tempestuous. The Struggles for them are the true Source of all those Factions which are perpetually dividing the Nation, distracting its Councils, hurrying it sometimes into fruitless and mischievous Wars, and often compelling a Submission to dishonourable Terms of Peace.

And of what kind are the men that will strive for this profitable Preëminence, thro' all the Bustle of Cabal, the Heat of Contention, the infinite mutual Abuse of Parties, tearing to Pieces the best of Characters? It will not be the wise and moderate, the Lovers of Peace and good Order, the men

fittest for the Trust. It will be the Bold and the Violent, the men of strong Passions and indefatigable Activity in their selfish Pursuits. These will thrust themselves into your Government, and be your Rulers. And these, too, will be mistaken in the expected Happiness of their Situation; for their vanquish'd competitors, of the same Spirit, and from the same Motives, will perpetually be endeavouring to distress their Administration, thwart their Measures, and render them odious to the People.

Besides these Evils, Sir, tho' we may set out in the Beginning with moderate Salaries, we shall find, that such will not be of long Continuance. Reasons will never be wanting for propos'd Augmentations; and there will always be a Party for giving more to the Rulers, that the Rulers may be able in Return to give more to them. Hence, as all History informs us, there has been in every State and Kingdom a constant kind of Warfare between the Governing and the Governed; the one striving to obtain more for its Support, and the other to pay less. And this has alone occasion'd great Convulsions, actual civil Wars, ending either in dethroning of the Princes or enslaving of the People. Generally, indeed, the Ruling Power carries its Point, and we see the Revenues of Princes constantly increasing, and we see that they are never satisfied, but always in want of more. The more the People are discontented with the Oppression of Taxes, the greater Need the Prince has of Money to distribute among his Partisans, and pay the Troops that are to suppress all Resistance, and enable him to plunder at Pleasure. There is scarce a King in a hundred, who would not, if he could, follow the Example of Pharaoh, — get first all the People's Money, then all their Lands, and then make them and their Children

Servants for ever. It will be said, that we do not propose to establish Kings. I know it. But there is a natural Inclination in Mankind to kingly Government. It sometimes relieves them from Aristocratic Domination. They had rather have one Tyrant than 500. It gives more of the Appearance of Equality among Citizens; and that they like. I am apprehensive, therefore, — perhaps too apprehensive, — that the Government of these States may in future times end in a Monarchy. But this Catastrophe, I think, may be long delay'd, if in our propos'd System we do not sow the Seeds of Contention, Faction, and Tumult, by making our Posts of Honour Places of Profit. If we do, I fear, that, tho' we employ at first a Number and not a single Person, the Number will in time be set aside; it will only nourish the Fœtus of a King (as the honourable Gentleman from Virg^a very aptly express'd it), and a King will the sooner be set over us.

It may be imagined by some, that this is an Utopian Idea, and that we can never find Men to serve us in the Executive Department, without paying them well for their Services. I conceive this to be a Mistake. Some existing Facts present themselves to me, which incline me to a contrary Opinion. The High Sheriff of a County in England is an honourable Office, but it is not a profitable one. It is rather expensive, and therefore not sought for. But yet it is executed, and well executed, and usually by some of the principal Gentlemen of the County. In France, the Office of Counsellor, or Member of their judiciary Parliaments, is more honourable. It is therefore purchas'd at a high Price; there are indeed Fees on the Law Proceedings, which are divided among them, but these Fees do not amount to more than three per cent on the Sum paid for the Place. Therefore, as legal

Interest is there at five per cent, they in fact pay two per cent for being allow'd to do the Judiciary Business of the Nation, which is at the same time entirely exempt from the Burthen of paying them any Salaries for their Services. I do not, however, mean to recommend this as an eligible Mode for our judiciary Department. I only bring the Instance to show, that the Pleasure of doing Good and serving their Country, and the Respect such Conduct entitles them to, are sufficient Motives with some Minds, to give up a great Portion of their Time to the Public, without the mean Inducement of pecuniary Satisfaction.

Another Instance is that of a respectable Society, who have made the Experiment, and practis'd it with Success, now more than a hundred years. I mean the Quakers. It is an establish'd Rule with them that they are not to go to law, but in their Controversies they must apply to their Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings. Committees of these sit with Patience to hear the Parties, and spend much time in composing their Differences. In doing this, they are supported by a Sense of Duty, and the Respect paid to Usefulness. It is honourable to be so employ'd, but it was never made profitable by Salaries, Fees, or Perquisites. And indeed, in all Cases of public Service, the less the Profit the greater the Honour.

To bring the Matter nearer home, have we not seen the greatest and most important of our Offices, that of General of our Armies, executed for Eight Years together, without the smallest Salary, by a patriot whom I will not now offend by any other Praise; and this, thro' Fatigues and Distresses, in common with the other brave Men, his military Friends and Companions, and the constant Anxieties peculiar to his

Station? And shall we doubt finding three or four Men in all the United States, with public Spirit enough to bear sitting in peaceful Council, for perhaps an equal Term, merely to preside over our civil Concerns, and see that our Laws are duly executed? Sir, I have a better opinion of our Country. I think we shall never be without a sufficient Number of wise and good Men to undertake, and execute well and faithfully, the Office in question.

Sir, the Saving of the Salaries, that may at first be propos'd, is not an object with me. The subsequent Mischiefs of proposing them are what I apprehend. And therefore it is that I move the Amendment. If it is not seconded or accepted, I must be contented with the Satisfaction of having delivered my Opinion frankly, and done my Duty.

1691. SPEECH IN A COMMITTEE OF THE CON-
VENTION; (L. C.)

ON THE PROPORTION OF REPRESENTATION AND VOTES ¹

MR. CHAIRMAN,

It has given me great Pleasure to observe, that, till this Point, *the Proportion of Representation*, came before us, our Debates were carry'd on with great Coolness and Temper. If any thing of a contrary kind has, on this Occasion, appeared, I hope it will not be repeated; for we are sent hither to *consult*, not to *contend*, with each other; and Declaration of a fix'd Opinion, and of determined Resolutions never to change

¹ From an auto. draft in L. C. This speech was delivered June 11, 1787.
—ED.

it, neither enlighten nor convince us. Positiveness and Warmth on one side naturally beget their like on the other; and tend to create and augment Discord and Division in a great Concern, wherein Harmony and Union are extremely necessary, to give Weight to our Counsels, and render them effectual in promoting and securing the common Good.

I must own, that I was originally of Opinion it would be better if every Member of Congress, or our national Council, were to consider himself rather as a Representative of the whole, than as an Agent for the Interests of a particular State; in which Case the Proportion of Members for each State would be of less Consequence, and it would not be very material whether they voted by States or individually. But as I find this is not to be expected, I now think the Number of Representatives should bear some Proportion to the Number of the Represented, and that the Decisions should be by the Majority of Members, not by the Majority of States. This is objected to, from an Apprehension that the greater States would then swallow up the Smaller. I do not at present clearly see what Advantage the greater States could propose to themselves by swallowing the smaller, and therefore do not apprehend they would attempt it. I recollect, that in the Beginning of this Century, when the Union was propos'd of the two Kingdoms, England and Scotland, the Scotch patriots were full of Fears, that, unless they had an equal Number of Representatives in Parliament, they should be ruined by the Superiority of the English. They finally agreed, however, that the different Proportions of Importance in the Union of the two Nations should be attended to; whereby they were to have only Forty Members in the House of Commons, and only Sixteen of their Peers were to sit in

the House of Lords; a very great Inferiority of Numbers! And yet, to this Day, I do not recollect that any thing has been done in the Parliament of Great Britain to the Prejudice of Scotland; and whoever looks over the Lists of publick Officers, Civil and Military, of that Nation, will find, I believe, that the North Britons enjoy at least their full proportion of Emolument.

But, Sir, in the present Mode of Voting by States, it is equally in the Power of the lesser States to swallow up the greater; and this is mathematically demonstrable. Suppose, for example, that 7 smaller States had each 3 members in the House, and the Six larger to have, one with another, 6 Members; and that, upon a Question, two Members of each smaller State should be in the Affirmative, and one in the Negative; they will make

Affirmatives,

14 Negatives 7

And that all the large States should

be unanimously in the negative;

they would make

Negatives 36

—

In all 41 [sic]

It is then apparent, that the 14 carry the question against the 41, and the Minority overpowers the Majority, contrary to the common Practice of Assemblies in all Countries and Ages.

The greater States, Sir, are naturally as unwilling to have their Property left in the Disposition of the smaller, as the smaller are to leave theirs in the Disposition of the greater. An honourable Gentleman has, to avoid this difficulty, hinted a Proposition of equalizing the States. It appears to me an equitable one; and I should, for my own Part, not be against

such a Measure, if it might be found practicable. Formerly, indeed, when almost every Province had a different Constitution, some with greater, others with fewer Privileges, it was of Importance to the Borderers, when their Boundaries were contested, whether, by running the Division Lines, they were placed on one Side or the other. At present, when such Differences are done away, it is less material. The Interest of a State is made up of the Interests of its individual Members. If they are not injured, the State is not injured. Small States are more easily, well, and happily governed, than large ones. If, therefore, in such an equal Division, it should be found necessary to diminish Pennsylvania, I should not be averse to the giving a part of it to N. Jersey, and another to Delaware: But as there would probably be considerable Difficulties in adjusting such a Division; and, however equally made at first, it would be continually varying by the Augmentation of Inhabitants in some States, and their more fixed proportion in others, and thence frequent Occasion for new Divisions; I beg leave to propose for the Consideration of the Committee another Mode, which appears to me to be as equitable, more easily carry'd into Practice, and more permanent in its Nature.

Let the weakest State say what Proportion of Money or Force it is able and willing to furnish for the general Purposes of the Union.

Let all the others oblige themselves to furnish each an equal Proportion.

The whole of these joint Supplies to be absolutely in the Disposition of Congress.

The Congress in this Case to be compos'd of an equal Number of Delegates from each State;

And their Decisions to be by the Majority of individual Members voting.

If these joint and equal Supplies should, on particular Occasions, not be sufficient, let Congress make Requisitions on the richer and more powerful States for further Aids, to be voluntarily afforded; so leaving each State the Right of considering the Necessity and Utility of the Aid desired, and of giving more or less, as it should be found proper.

This Mode is not new; it was formerly practic'd with Success by the British Government, with respect to Ireland and the Colonies. We sometimes gave even more than they expected, or thought just to accept; and in the last War, carried on while we were united, they gave us back in 5 Years a Million Sterling. We should probably have continu'd such voluntary Contributions, whenever the Occasions appear'd to require them for the common Good of the Empire. It was not till they chose to force us, and to deprive us of the Merit and Pleasure of voluntary Contributions, that we refus'd and resisted. Those Contributions, however, were to be dispos'd of at the Pleasure of a Government in which we had no Representative. I am therefore persuaded, that they will not be refus'd to one in which the Representation shall be equal.

My learned Colleague has already mentioned that the present method of voting by States, was submitted to originally by Congress, under a Conviction of its Impropriety, Inequality, and Injustice. This appears in the Words of their Resolution. It is of Sept. 6, 1774. The words are,

“Resolved, That, in determining Questions in this Congress, each Colony or Province shall have one vote; the Congress not being possessed of, or at present able to procure, Materials for ascertaining the Importance of each Colony.”

1692. MOTION

FOR PRAYERS IN THE CONVENTION¹ (L. C.)

MR. PRESIDENT,

The small Progress we have made, after 4 or 5 Weeks' close Attendance and continual Reasonings with each other, our different Sentiments on almost every Question, several of the last producing as many *Noes* as *Ayes*, is, methinks, a melancholy Proof of the Imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to *feel* our own want of political Wisdom, since we have been running all about in Search of it. We have gone back to ancient History for Models of Government, and examin'd the different Forms of those Republics, which, having been originally form'd with the Seeds of their own Dissolution, now no longer exist; and we have view'd modern States all round Europe, but find none of their Constitutions suitable to our Circumstances.

In this Situation of this Assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find Political Truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our Understandings? In the Beginning of the Contest with Britain, when we were sensible of Danger, we had daily Prayers in this Room for the Divine Protection. Our Prayers, Sir, were heard;—and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engag'd in the Struggle, must have observed frequent Instances of a

¹ From an auto. draft in L. C. The "motion" was made June 28, 1787.
—ED.

superintending Providence in our Favour. To that kind Providence we owe this happy Opportunity of Consulting in Peace on the Means of establishing our future national Felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine we no longer need its assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth, *that GOD governs in the Affairs of Men*. And if a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without his Notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his Aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that “except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it” I firmly believe this; and I also believe, that, without his concurring Aid, we shall succeed in this political Building no better than the Builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local Interests, our Projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a Reproach and a Bye-word down to future Ages. And, what is worse, Mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate Instance, despair of establishing Government by human Wisdom, and leave it to Chance, War, and Conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move,

That henceforth Prayers, imploring the Assistance of Heaven and its Blessing on our Deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to Business; and that one or more of the Clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that Service.¹

¹ Note by Franklin.—“The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!” —ED.

1693. PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION

IN THE CONVENTION FOR FORMING THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE UNITED STATES (L. C.)

June 30. 1787.

THAT the Legislatures of the several States shall choose and send an equal Number of delegates, namely, who are to compose the second Branch of the General Legislature.

That in all Cases or Questions wherein the Sovereignities of the Individual States may be effected, or whereby their Authority over their own Citizens may be diminished, or the Authority of the General Government within the several States augmented, each State shall have *equal* Suffrage.

That in the Appointment of all civil Officers of the *General Government*, in the Election of whom the Second Branch may, by the Constitution, have part, each State shall have *equal* Suffrage.

That in fixing the Salaries of such Officers, in all Allowances for public Services, and generally in all Appropriations and Dispositions of Money, to be drawn out of the General Treasury, and in all Laws for supplying the Treasury, the Delegates of the several States shall have Suffrage *in proportion to the Sums their respective States had actually contributed to that Treasury from their Taxes or internal Excises*.

That, in case general Duties should be laid by Impost on Goods imported, a liberal Estimation shall be made of the Amount of such Impost paid in the Price of the Commodities

by those States that import but little, and a proportionate Addition shall be allowed of Suffrage to such States, and an equal Diminution of the Suffrage of the States importing.

REMARKS.

THE steady Course of public Measures is most probably to be expected from a Number.

A single Person's Measures may be good. The Successor often differs in Opinion of those Measures, and adopts others; often is ambitious of distinguishing himself by opposing them, and offering new Projects. One is peaceably dispos'd; another may be fond of War, &c. Hence foreign States can never have that Confidence in the Treaties or Friendship of such a Government, as in that which is conducted by a Number.

The single Head may be Sick; who is to conduct the Public Affairs in that Case? When he dies, who are to conduct till a new Election? If a Council, why not continue them? Shall we not be harass'd with Factions for the Election of Successors; and become, like Poland, weak from our Dissensions?

Consider the present distracted Condition of Holland. They had at first a Stadtholder, the Prince of Orange, a Man of undoubted and great Merit. They found some Inconveniencies, however, in the Extent of Powers annex'd to that Office, and exercis'd by a single Person. On his Death, they resum'd and divided those Powers among the States and Cities; but there has been a constant Struggle since between that Family and the Nation. In the last Century, the then Prince of Orange found Means to inflame the Populace against their Magistrates, excite a general Insurrection, in which an

excellent Minister, Dewit, was murdered, all the old Magistrates displac'd, and the Stadtholder re-invested with all the former Powers. In this Century, the father of the present Stadtholder, having married a British princess, did, by exciting another Insurrection, force from the Nation a Decree, that the stadtholdership should be thenceforth hereditary in his Family. And now his Son, being suspected of having favoured England in the late War, and thereby lost the Confidence of the Nation, is forming an internal Faction to support his Power, and reinstate his Favourite, the Duke of Brunswick; and he holds up his Family Alliances with England and Prussia to terrify Opposition. It was this Conduct of the Stadtholder, which induc'd the States to recur to the Protection of France, and put their Troops under a French, rather than the Stadtholder's German General, the Duke of Brunswick. And this is the Source of all the present Disorders in Holland, which, if the Stadtholder has Abilities equal to his Inclinations, will probably, after a ruinous and bloody civil War, end in establishing an hereditary Monarchy in his Family.

1694. TO JOHN PAUL JONES (L. L.)

Philad^a July 22, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry I cannot yet send you the Papers you desir'd. My Grandson has remain'd in the Country longer than I expected, and is still there. But I will send them to you at Paris by the first Opportunity, under Cover to Mr Jefferson. Be pleased to present my Respects to him, and acquaint him that the Convention goes on well, and that there is hope of

great Good to result from their Counsels. — I intended to have wrote to him: but three Days Illness from which I have hardly recovered have prevented me. Please to acquaint M^r Short, too, that I received the Packets he was so kind as to send me and am much oblig'd to him for his Care of them. — I wish you a good Voyage, and every kind of Prosperity; being, with sincere Esteem, Dear Sir,

Your most obedient &
most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

I am not able to write by this Ship to any of my Friends in Paris, being so weak as to be scarce able to finish this Letter.

1695. TO CALEB WHITEFOORD¹ (B. M.)

Southampton, July 27. 1787.

DEAR FRIEND

My Son has shown me here a Newspaper, with your Friendly Vindication of me; for which good Office accept my Thanks. The writer of the Calumny you have so well refuted, manifests a good deal of Malignancy in his Nature; and such People are afflicted and punished, when they find those Accusations false, which they wish'd to be true. He may therefore be left to himself; and it is hardly worth while to let him know, that the Person he is so desirous of defaming,

¹ The original of this letter is "36593 Whitefoord" in the British Museum. It is in Franklin's best handwriting and clearly and unmistakably dated as above. It is as certainly however an error and the date should be 1785. Upon the same day (July 27) W. T. Franklin wrote to Whitefoord a letter, which is also in the Whitefoord collection, in which he referred in like manner to the compensation that had been so long delayed. — ED.

not only did not mention the Transaction he alludes to, at the time he states, but at no other time, nor to any other Person or Persons, from the Day it happen'd, to the present.

I am sorry to learn that no Compensation has been made to you for your Services here at the Treaty. Had Mr. Oswald surviv'd he certainly would have endeavour'd to procure something for you; tho' he intended, as I heard him say, to demand nothing for himself. With great Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most Affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1696. TO S. OSGOOD AND A. LEE (A. P. S.)

Phi. Aug. 31. 1787

GENT^N.

I received the L^r you did me the Hon to write to me the 16th Inst. respecting the Accounts of Mr. Ross, with their Vouchers suppos'd to be in my Hands. I have made some Search but do not find them, and think they were probably deliver'd with other publick Accounts to Mr. Barclay. However, as soon as my Grandson returns from Albany, whom I expect in a Week or ten Days, and, who knows better than I do the Arrangement of our immense Mass of Papers, I shall cause a more full Search to be made, and if those you demand are found they shall be immediately sent to you

I have the honour to be &c

[B. F.]

1697. SPEECH IN THE CONVENTION,

AT THE CONCLUSION OF ITS DELIBERATIONS¹ (L. C.)

MR. PRESIDENT,

I confess, that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present; but, Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it; for, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change my opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. It is therefore that, the older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment of others. Most men, indeed, as well as most sects in religion, think themselves in possession of all truth, and that wherever others differ from them, it is so far error. Steele, a Protestant, in a dedication, tells the Pope, that the only difference between our two churches in their opinions of the certainty of their doctrine, is, the Romish Church is *infallible*, and the Church of England is *never in the wrong*. But, though many private Persons think almost as highly of their own infallibility as of that of their Sect, few express it so naturally as a certain French Lady, who, in a little dispute with her sister, said, “But I meet with nobody but myself that is *always* in the right.” “*Je ne trouve que moi qui aie toujours raison.*”

In these sentiments, Sir, I agree to this Constitution, with all its faults, — if they are such; because I think a general Government necessary for us, and there is no *form* of government but what may be a blessing to the people, if well

¹ From a trans. in L. C. The date of the speech is September 17, 1787. — ED.

administered; and I believe, farther, that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupted as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other. I doubt, too, whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better constitution; for, when you assemble a number of men, to have the advantage of their joint wisdom, you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. From such an assembly can a *perfect* production be expected? It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does; and I think it will astonish our enemies, who are waiting with confidence to hear, that our councils are confounded like those of the builders of Babel, and that our States are on the point of separation, only to meet hereafter for the purpose of cutting one another's throats. Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its *errors* I sacrifice to the public good. I have never whispered a syllable of them abroad. Within these walls they were born, and here they shall die. If every one of us, in returning to our Constituents, were to report the objections he has had to it, and endeavour to gain Partisans in support of them, we might prevent its being generally received, and thereby lose all the salutary effects and great advantages resulting naturally in our favour among foreign nations, as well as among ourselves, from our real or apparent unanimity. Much of the strength and efficiency of any government, in procuring and securing happiness to the people, depends on *opinion*, on the

general opinion of the goodness of that government, as well as of the wisdom and integrity of its governors. I hope, therefore, for our own sakes, as a part of the people, and for the sake of our posterity, that we shall act heartily and unanimously in recommending this Constitution, wherever our Influence may extend, and turn our future thoughts and endeavours to the means of having it *well administered*.

On the whole, Sir, I cannot help expressing a wish, that every member of the Convention who may still have objections to it, would with me on this occasion doubt a little of his own infallibility, and, to make *manifest* our *unanimity*, put his name to this Instrument.

[Then the motion was made for adding the last formula, viz. "Done in convention by the Unanimous Consent," &c.; which was agreed to and added accordingly.]

1698. TO ARTHUR ST. CLAIR AND OTHER DELEGATES IN CONGRESS¹

In Council, Philadelphia, September 20, 1787.

GENTLEMEN:—Enclosed is a letter to General Clinton, which we send unsealed for your perusal, with the several papers of intelligence that accompany it. The Council have thought of sending a few resolute men, authorized to apprehend and bring off Franklin and Jenkins; but if they should

¹ Arthur St. Clair (1734–1818) was a delegate to the Continental Congress, November 2, 1785, till November 28, 1787, and its president in 1787. He was a grandson of the Earl of Roslyn, and was a brigadier-general in the Revolutionary War.—ED.

be on the York side of the line, it might be impracticable, without the concurrence of that government. You will see that we have requested the Governor to have a conference with you on the subject, in which, if it take place, we desire you would not only discuss what may be proper for the securing the ringleaders of the sedition, but concert some general measures for the two States to take, that it may be effectually and totally suppressed, and that you would report to us the result of your conference as soon as may be.

P. S. — You will see the propriety and necessity of keeping the proceedings secret, as well as the names of the informers, and you will return the enclosed papers.

The letter to Governor Clinton which was enclosed was as follows :

In Council, 22 September, 1787.

SIR : — Your Excellency will see by the papers and letters of intelligence, which I have the honour of communicating to you, that there are a number of disorderly people collecting near the line that divides our two States, who are impatient of regular government, and seize upon and presume to dispose of lands contrary to and in defiance of the laws. It has appeared to me by other evidence that their numbers are daily increasing by vagabonds from all quarters, and that they expect reinforcements from Shay's late partisans, and purpose defending their proceedings by force of arms. Your Excellency will be sensible with us of the mischief such a body of banditti may be capable of occasioning to both our States if suffered to increase and establish themselves in that country, the vicinity of the boundary line affording them at present an imaginary security, since, if pursued by the authority of

one State, they can easily step over into the others. Your Excellency's readiness, manifested on other occasions, to aid the operations of general justice, even in the neighbouring governments, leaves no room to doubt of your concurring with us in the measures that may be necessary to defeat the projects of those people, some of whose leaders are said to be inhabitants of your State. For the concerting such measures the council of this government unanimously and earnestly request your Excellency would be pleased to permit our delegates in Congress to have a conference with you.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

B. FRANKLIN, president.

In Council, 26 September, 1787.

SIR: — You are to take what number of militia you think necessary, and proceed with the greatest despatch to Wilkesbarre, in the County of Luzerne. When there, if you think it necessary, consult Colonel Pickering on the best method you can take to apprehend John Franklin, John Jenkins, Zerah Beach, and John McKinstry. Should you take all or any of these men prisoners, you are to bring them to Philadelphia. If you take Franklin at Wilkesbarre do not proceed any farther, or run the risk of losing him by endeavouring to apprehend the others. Council have the utmost reliance on your secrecy and your prudence in conducting this affair. If opposed by force, you are to use force, and execute the warrants at all events.

B. FRANKLIN, President.

To Colonel John Craig.

1699. TO MRS. JANE MECOM¹ (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Sept. 20, 1787.

DEAR SISTER,

I received your kind Letter of the 16th past, which gave me the great Pleasure of learning that you were well. I thought I had before acknowledged the Receipt of yours per Colonel Sergeant.

The Convention finish'd the 17th Instant. I attended the Business of it 5 Hours in every Day from the Beginning, which is something more than four Months. You may judge from thence, that my Health continues; some tell me I look better, and they suppose the daily Exercise of going and returning from the Statehouse has done me good. You will see the Constitution we have propos'd in the Papers. The Forming of it so as to accommodate all the different Interests and Views was a difficult Task; and perhaps, after all, it may not be received with the same Unanimity in the different States, that the Convention have given the Example of in delivering it out for their Consideration. We have, however, done our best, and it must take its chance.

I agree with you perfectly in your disapprobation of war. Abstracted from the inhumanity of it, I think it wrong in point of human prudence; for, whatever advantage one nation would obtain from another, whether it be part of their territory, the liberty of commerce with them, free passage on their rivers, &c. &c., it would be much cheaper to purchase such advantage with ready money than to pay the expense of acquiring it by war. An army is a devouring monster, and,

¹ From an incomplete letter-press copy in L. C. — ED.

when you have raised it, you have, in order to subsist it, not only the fair charges of pay, clothing, provisions, arms, and ammunition, with numberless other contingent and just charges to answer and satisfy, but you have all the additional knavish charges of the numerous tribe of contractors to defray, with those of every other dealer who furnishes the articles wanted for your army, and takes advantage of that want to demand exorbitant prices. It seems to me, that, if statesmen had a little more arithmetic, or were more accustomed to calculation, wars would be much less frequent. I am confident, that Canada might have been purchased from France for a tenth part of the money England spent in the conquest of it. And if, instead of fighting with us for the power of taxing us, she had kept us in good humour by allowing us to dispose of our own money, and now and then giving us a little of hers, by way of donation to colleges, or hospitals, or for cutting canals, or fortifying ports, she might have easily drawn from us much more by our occasional voluntary grants and contributions, than ever she could by taxes. Sensible people will give a bucket or two of water to a dry pump, that they may afterwards, get from it all they have occasion for. Her ministry were deficient in that little point of common sense. And so they spent one hundred millions of her money, and after all lost what they contended for.

I lament the loss your town has suffered this year by fire. I sometimes think men do not act like reasonable creatures when they build for themselves combustible dwellings, in which they are every day obliged to use fire. In my new buildings, I have taken a few precautions, not generally used; to wit, none of the wooden work of one room communicates with the wooden work of any other room; and all the floors,

and even the steps of the stairs, are plastered close to the boards, besides the plastering on the laths under the joists. There are also trap-doors to go out upon the roofs, that one may go out and wet the shingles in case of a neighbouring fire. But, indeed, I think the staircases should be stone, and the floors tiled as in Paris, and the roofs either tiled or slated.

I am much obliged to your friend and neighbour Mr. Lathrop,¹ for his kind present, and purpose writing to him. It is a discourse well written.

I sent you lately a Barrel of Flour, and I blame myself for not sooner desiring you to lay in your Winter's Wood, and drawing upon me for it as last Year. But I have been so busy. To avoid such Neglect in Future, I now make the Direction general, that you draw on me every Year for the same purpose.

Adieu, my dear Sister, and believe me ever your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1700. TO ALEXANDER SMALL (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Sept. 28, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind Letter of June 6, 86, and I answered it, tho' long after the Receipt. I do not perceive by your second Favour of July, 87,² that my Answer had then come to hand, but hope it may since that time.

I have not lost any of the Principles of Public Œconomy you once knew me possess'd of; but, to get the bad Customs of a

¹ John Lathrop, or Lothrop, Boston clergyman, 1740–1816. The present was a copy of a Discourse before the humane society in Boston. His letter to Franklin is dated August 30, 1787 (A. P. S.). — ED.

² Both these letters, June 6, 1786, and July 3, 1787, are in A. P. S. — ED.

Country chang'd, and new ones, though better, introduc'd, it is necessary first to remove the Prejudices of the People, enlighten their Ignorance, and convince them that their Interest will be promoted by the propos'd Changes; and this is not the Work of a Day. Our Legislators are all Land-holders; and they are not yet persuaded, that all taxes are finally paid by the Land. Besides, our Country is so sparsely settled, the Habitations, particularly in the Back Countries, being perhaps 5 or 6 Miles distant from each other, that the Time and Labour of the Collector in going from House to House, and being oblig'd to call often before he can recover the Tax, amounts to more than the Tax is worth, and therefore, we have been forc'd into the Mode of indirect Taxes, i. e. Duties on Importation of Goods, and Excises.

I have made no Attempt to introduce the Form of Prayer here, which you and good Mrs. Baldwin do me the Honour to approve. The things of *this* World take up too much of my Time, of which indeed I have too little left, to undertake any thing like a Reformation in Matters of Religion. When we can sow good Seed, we should however do it, and wait, when we can do no better, with Patience Nature's Time, for their Sprouting. Some lie many years in the Ground, and at length certain favourable Seasons or Circumstances bring them forth with vigorous Shoots and plentiful Productions.

Had I been at home as you wish, soon after the Peace, I might possibly have mitigated some of the Severities against the Royalists, believing, as I do, that Fear and Error, rather than Malice, occasion'd their Desertion of their Country's Cause, and Adoption of the King's. The public Resentment against them is now so far abated, that none who ask Leave to return are refus'd, and many of them now live among us

much at their Ease. As to the Restoration of confiscated Estates, it is an Operation that none of our Politicians have as yet ventur'd to propose. They are a sort of People, that love to fortify themselves in their Projects by Precedent. Perhaps they wait to see your Government restore the forfeited Estates in Scotland to the Scotch, those in Ireland to the Irish, and those in England to the Welsh!

I am glad that the distressed Exiles, who remain with you, have receiv'd, or are likely to receive, some compensation for their Losses, for I commiserate their Situation. It was clearly incumbent on the King to indemnify those he had seduc'd by his Proclamations; but it seems not so clearly consistent with the Wisdom of Parliament to resolve doing it for him. If some mad King hereafter should think fit, in a Freak, to make War upon his subjects of Scotland, or upon those of England, by the help of Scotland and Ireland, (as the Stewarts did,) may he not encourage Followers by the Precedent of these Parliamentary Gratuities, and thus set his Subjects to cutting one another's Throats, first with the Hope of sharing in Confiscations, and then with that of Compensation in case of Disappointment? The Council of Brutes in the old Fable were aware of this. Lest that Fable may perhaps not have fallen in your way, I enclose a Copy of it.

Your Commercial Treaty with France seems to show a growing Improvement in the Sentiments of both Nations in the Œconomical Science. All Europe might be a great deal happier with a little more Understanding. We in America have lately had a Convention for framing a new Constitution. Enclos'd I send you the result of their Deliberations. Whether it will be generally acceptable and carried into Execution is yet to be seen; but present Appearances are in its Favour.

I am always glad to hear from you, and of your Welfare. I remember with Pleasure the happy Days we have spent together. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1701. TO PROFESSOR LANDRIANI (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Oct^r 14. 1787.

SIR

I received by the hand of M^r Gibbs your excellent Dissertation *dell' Uplita dei Conduttori elettrici* which you have had the Goodness to send me. I have read it with great Pleasure. Be pleased to accept my hearty Thanks.

I find upon my Return to this Country that the Number of Conductors is greatly increased, their Utility having been made manifest by many instances of their good Effect in preserving Buildings. Among others, my own House in my Absence receiv'd a great Stroke which was visible to the Neighbours, who immediately ran in to see if any Damage was done, or any Fire commenc'd which might by their Assistance be extinguish'd. They found nothing disorder'd, and the Family only much frighten'd by the Loudness of the Explosion. On making an Addition to my House last year the Conductor was taken down to be remov'd, when I found that the Copper Point which had been nine Inches long, and in its thickest Part about one third of an Inch Diameter, had been almost all melted and blown away, very little of it remaining attach'd to the Iron Rod. So that at length the Invention has been of some Use to the Inventor, and afforded an additional Pleasure to that of having seen it

useful to others. M^r Rittenhauss our Astronomer, informs me, that having inspected with his excellent Telescope many Conductors that are within his View, he finds that the Points of a Number of them have also been melted; and we have no Instance of any considerable Damage done to any House that was furnished with a compleat Conductor; and very few of Damage to any other Houses in the City since Conductors became common.

With great Esteem and Respect I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1702. TO GAETANO FILANGIERI (L. C.)

Philad^a, Oct. 14, 1787.

DEAR SIR:— Believing it may be a Matter of some Curiosity to you to know what is doing in this Part of the World respecting Legislation, I send you inclos'd a Copy of the new Federal Constitution propos'd by a Convention of the States.

We are so remote from each other, that it is difficult to keep up a regular Correspondence between us, and it is long since I had the Pleasure of hearing from you. Some of the Books you sent me did not come to hand, so that I want of

volume	3 ^d	.	.	.	.	.	.	9	} to complete what I have,
"	4 th	.	.	.	.	.	.	8	
"	5 th	.	.	.	.	.	.	8	
"	6 th	.	.	.	.	.	.	8	
"	7 th	.	.	.	.	.	.	8	

and if any more Volumes are publish'd of your invaluable

Work, I should be glad to have 8 of each sent to me. Mr. Grand, my Banker at Paris, will pay the Bookseller's Bill.

With the highest Esteem, I have the honour to be, sir,
your most obedient Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

President of the State of Pennsylvania.

1703. TO FERDINAND GRAND (L. C.)

Philad^a, Oct. 22, 1787.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received by the last Pacquet your Favour of Aug^t 6, but the Things you mention sent by Madame Helvétius, did not come in that Ship, and I wish you to enquire what became of them.

I send you enclos'd the propos'd new Federal Constitution for these States. I was engag'd 4 Months of the last Summer in the convention that form'd it. It is now sent by Congress to the several States for their Confirmation. If it succeeds, I do not see why you might not in Europe carry the Project of good Henry the 4th into Execution, by forming a Federal Union and One Grand Republick of all its different States and Kingdoms, by means of a like Convention, for we had many Interests to reconcile.

I hope you and yours are well. I continue so, but am too full of Business to write by this Pacquet to my other Friends. I am glad you liked my young Carolinian. I have recommended another Gentleman of that State to your Civilities, the Honourable Mr. Charles Pinckney, Member of Congress, and one of the late Convention. He is a Man of Fortune, and an excellent Character; but you will not see

him till next Spring. I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I drew on you not long since for 10,000 Livres.

1704. TO DONATIEN LE RAY DE CHAUMONT
(L. C.)

Philad^a, Oct. 22, 1787

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your very valuable Son having desired of me a Certificate of his good Behavior here, which he thinks may be of some Use to him in an Application for Employment in Europe, I gave it with great Pleasure, as being equally conformable to my Sentiments and to Truth and Justice. It is here enclosed.

I hope the whole amiable Family continue well and happy. Be pleased to present my affectionate Respects to Madame de Chaumont, and Love to Mad^e Foucault, to ma Femme, ma chere Amie, et mon Enfant. Ma Femme me sera grand Plaisir en m'envoyant les Notes de la Religieuse, mais pas autant qu'elle m'a souvent donné en les jouant. I am, my dear Friend, yours sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1705. TO MRS. JANE MECOM¹

Philadelphia, November 4, 1787

DEAR SISTER,

I received a kind letter from you lately, which gave me the pleasure of being informed that you were well. I am glad

¹ First printed by Sparks, Vol. X, p. 325. — ED.

you have made the provision against the winter, which I mentioned to you. Your bill is honoured. It is impossible for me always to guess what you may want, and I hope, therefore, that you will never be shy in letting me know wherein I can help to make your life more comfortable.

It was my intention to decline serving another year as President, that I might be at liberty to take a trip to Boston in the spring: but I submit to the unanimous voice of my country, which has again placed me in the chair. I have now been upwards of fifty years employed in public offices. When I informed your good friend Dr. Cooper, that I was ordered to France, being then seventy years old, and observed, that the public, having as it were eaten my flesh, seemed now resolved to pick my bones, he replied that he approved their taste, for that the nearer the bone the sweeter the meat. I must own, that it is no small pleasure to me, and I suppose it will give my sister pleasure, that, after such a long trial of me, I should be elected a third time by my fellow citizens, without a dissenting vote but my own, to fill the most honourable post in their power to bestow. This universal and unbounded confidence of a whole people flatters my vanity much more than a peerage could do.

“Hung o’er with ribands and stuck round with strings,”

may give nominal, but not real honours.

This family are all well, as I also am, thanks to God. We join in best wishes for you and yours. And I am ever, my dear sister, your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1706. TO COMTE DE BUFFON¹ (L. C.)Philad^a, Nov. 19, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I am honour'd by your Letter,² desiring to know by what Means I am reliev'd in a Disorder, with which you are also unfortunately afflicted as well as myself. I have try'd all the noted Prescriptions for *diminishing* the Stone without perceiving any good Effect. But observing Temperance in Eating, avoiding Wine and cyder, and using daily the Dumb Bell, which exercises the upper Part of the Body without much moving the Parts in contact with the Stone, I think I have prevented its *Increase*.

As the Roughness of the Stone lacerates a little the Neck of the Bladder, I find, that, when the Urine happens to be sharp, I have much Pain in making Water and frequent Urgencies. For Relief under this Circumstance, I take, going to Bed, the Bigness of a Pigeon's Egg of Jelly of Blackberries. The Receipt for making it is enclos'd. While I continue to do this every Night, I am generally easy the day following, making Water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple Remedy may have the same happy Effect with you. Perhaps Current Jelly, or the Jelly of Apples or Raspberries, may be equally serviceable; for I suspect the Virtue of this Jelly may lie principally in the boiled Sugar, which is in some degree candied by the Boiling of the Jelly. Wishing you for your own

¹ Georges-Louis le Clerk, Comte de Buffon (1707-1788), the famous naturalist. — ED.

² This letter, written July 18, 1787, is in A. P. S. — ED.

Sake much more Ease, and for the Sake of Mankind many more years, I remain with the greatest Esteem and Respect, dear Sir, your affectionate and most obedient Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1707. TO MRS. JANE MECOM (L. C.)

Philad^a, Dec. 11, 1787.

DEAR SISTER:—Since I wrote to you last, your Son Collas ¹ has been here from Carolina, where he kept a Store, but it has not answered his Expectations. He wanted to take up Goods on Credit here, but could not obtain any unless I would recommend it to our Merchants to give it, which I could not do without making myself liable, and that I did not incline to do, having no Opinion either of the Honesty and Punctuality of the People with whom he proposed to traffick, or of his Skill and Acuteness in Merchandizing. I write this merely to apologize for any seeming Unkindness on my part in not so promoting his Views.

You always tell me that you live comfortably; but I sometimes suspect that you may be too unwilling to acquaint me with any of your Difficulties from an Apprehension of giving me Pain. I wish you would let me know precisely your Situation, that I may better proportion my Assistance to your Wants. Have you any Money at Interest, and what does it produce? Or do you do some kind of Business for a Living? If you have hazarded any of your Stock in the above-mentioned trading Project, I am afraid you will have but slender Returns. Lest you should be straitened during the present

¹ Son-in-law. — ED.

Winter, I send you on a Corner of this Sheet a Bill of Exchange on our Cousin, Tuthill Hubbard, for Fifty Dollars, which you can cut off and present to him for Payment.

The Barrel of Flour I formerly mentioned to you as sent, was not then sent, thro' the Forgetfulness or Neglect of the merch^t who promis'd to send it. But I am told it is now gone, and I hope will arrive safe.

I received your late Letter, with one from my dear Friend, Mrs. Greene, and one from [my] good Niece your Daughter; all which I have at present mislaid, and therefore cannot now answer them particularly, but shall as soon as I find them.

My Love to all our Relations and Friends, and believe me ever, your affectionate Brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1708. TO ———¹

Philadelphia, December 15, 1787.

—— I HOPE the disorders in Brabant and Holland may be rectified without bloodshed. But I fear the impending war with the Turks, if not prevented by prudent negotiation, may in its consequences involve great part of Europe. I confide, however, that France and England will preserve their present peace with each other, notwithstanding some contrary appearances; for I think, that they have both of them *too much sense* to go to war without an important cause, as well as *too little money* at present.

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 232. — ED.

As to the projected conquest of Turkey, I apprehend, that, if the Emperor and Empress would make some use of arithmetic, and calculate what annual revenues may be expected from the country they want, should they acquire it, and then offer the grand Signior a hundred times that annual revenue, to be paid down for an amicable purchase of it, it would be his interest to accept the offer, as well as theirs to make it, rather than a war for it should take place; since a war, to acquire that territory and to retain it, will cost both parties much more, perhaps ten times more, than such sum of purchase money. But the hope of glory, and the ambition of princes, are not subject to arithmetical calculation. My best wishes attend you; being with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1709. TO SAMUEL ELBERT ¹ (L. C.)

Philad^a Dec. 16, 1787.

SIR,

I received by Mr. Dromgoole the Letter your Excell^y did me the Honour of writing to me the 2^d of November past, and am much concern'd to hear that a War between the State of Georgia and the Creek Indians was unavoidable.

During the Course of a long Life in which I have made Observations on public Affairs, it has appear'd to me that almost every War between the Indians and Whites has been occasion'd by some Injustice of the latter towards the former. It is indeed extreamly imprudent in us to quarrel with them for their Lands, as they are generally willing to sell, and sell such good Bargains: And a War with them is so mischievous

¹ Governor of Georgia. — ED.

to us, in unsettling frequently a great Part of our Frontier, & reducing the Inhabitants to Poverty and Distress, and is besides so expensive that it is much cheaper as well as honester, to buy their Lands than to take them by Force.

Your State would, I imagine, be much more secure from the Mischiefs of Indian Wars, if you imitated the Mode of Settlement in the New England States, which was to grant their Lands in Townships of about 6 Mile square to 60 Families. These first chose a Spot for their Town, where they clear'd a Square of perhaps 20 Acres, round which they fix'd their Houses 15 on a Side all fronting inwards to the Square; so that they were all in sight of each other. In the middle of the Square they erected a House for publick Worship and a School, stockaded round as a Fort for the reception & Protection of their Women & Children in Case of Alarm. Behind each House was first a Garden Plot, then an Orchard, and then a Pasture for a Cow or two, & behind all outwards their Corn field. Thus situated one House could not be attacked without its being seen & giving alarm to the rest, who were ready to run to its Succour. This discourag'd such Attempts. Then they had the Advantage of giving Schooling to their Children, securing their Morals by the Influence of Religion, and improving each other by civil Society & Conversation. In our Way of sparse and remote Settlements, the People are without these Advantages, and we are in danger of bringing up a Sett of Savages of our own Colour.

1710. TO THE PRINTER OF THE EVENING
HERALD ¹ (L. C.)

SIR,

The British Newswriters are very assiduous in their endeavours to blacken America. Should we not be careful not to afford them any Assistance by Censures of one another, especially by Censures not well founded?

I lately observ'd, in one of your Papers, the Conduct of the State of Massachusetts reflected on as being inconsistent and absurd, as well as wicked, for attempting to raise a Tax by a Stamp Act, and for carrying on the Slave Trade.

The Writer of those Reflections might have considered, that their principal Objection to the Stamp Tax was, its being impos'd by a British Parliament, which had no right to tax them; for otherwise a Tax by Stamps is perhaps to be levied with as little Inconvenience to those who pay it as any other that can be invented. Ireland has a Stamp Act of its own; but, should Britain pretend to impose such a Tax on the Irish People, they would probably give a general Opposition to it, and ought not for that to be charged with Inconsistence.

One or two Merchants in Boston, employing Ships in the abominable African Trade, may deservedly be condemned, tho' they do not bring their Slaves home, but sell them in the West Indies. That State, as such, has never, that I have heard of, given Encouragement to the diabolical Commerce; and there has always been fewer Slaves in the New England Governments than in any other British Colonies. National

¹ The date of this piece is uncertain. — ED.

Reflections are seldom just, and a whole People should not be decry'd for the Crimes of a few Individuals.

Your inserting this may make that brave People some Amends, and will oblige one of your Customers, who is

A PENNSYLVANIAN.

1711. ON SENDING FELONS TO AMERICA ¹ (L. C.)

FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE

SIR,

We may all remember the Time when our Mother Country, as a Mark of her parental Tenderness, emptied her Jails into our Habitations, "*for the BETTER Peopling,*" as she express'd it, "*of the Colonies.*" It is certain that no due Returns have yet been made for these valuable Consignments. We are therefore much in her Debt on that Account; and, as she is of late clamorous for the Payment of all we owe her, and some of our Debts are of a kind not so easily discharg'd, I am for doing however what is in our Power. It will show our goodwill as to the rest. The Felons she planted among us have produc'd such an amazing Increase, that we are now enabled to make ample Remittance in the same Commodity. And since the Wheelbarrow Law is not found effectually to reform them, and many of our Vessels are idle through her Restraints on our Trade, why should we not employ those Vessels in transporting the Felons to Britain?

I was led into this Thought by perusing the Copy of a Petition to Parliament, which fell lately by Accident into

¹ The allusion to the "new colony of Botany Bay" fixes the date of this article at 1787. — ED.

my Hands. It has no Date, but I conjecture from some Circumstances, that it must have been about the year 1767 or 68. (It seems, if presented, it had no Effect, since the Act passed.) I imagine it may not be unacceptable to your Readers, and therefore transcribe it for your paper; viz.

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of Great Britain, in
Parliament assembled,

The PETITION of B. F., Agent for the Province of Pensilvania;

Most humbly sheweth;

That the Transporting of Felons from England to the Plantations in America, is, and hath long been, a great Grievance to the said Plantations in general.

That the said Felons, being landed in America, not only continue their evil Practices to the Annoyance of his Majesty's good Subjects there, but contribute greatly to corrupt the Morals of the Servants and poorer People among whom they are mixed.

That many of the said Felons escape from the Servitude to which they were destined, into other Colonies, where their Condition is not known; and, wandering at large from one populous Town to another, commit many Burglaries, Robberies, and Murders, to the great Terror of the People; and occasioning heavy Charges for apprehending and securing such Felons, and bringing them to Justice.

That your Petitioner humbly conceives the Easing one Part of the British Dominions of their Felons, by burthening another Part with the same Felons, cannot increase the common Happiness of his Majesty's Subjects, and that therefore the Trouble and Expence of transporting them is upon the whole altogether useless.

That your petitioner, nevertheless, observes with extream Concern in the Votes of Friday last, that leave is given to bring in a Bill for extending to Scotland, the Act made in the 4th Year of the Reign of King George the First, whereby the aforesaid Grievances are, as he understands, to be greatly increased by allowing Scotland also to transport its Felons to America.

Your petitioner therefore humbly prays, in behalf of Pensilvania, and the other Plantations in America, that the House would take the Premises into Consideration, and in their great Wisdom and Goodness repeal all Acts, and Clauses of Acts, for transporting of Felons; or, if this may not at present be done, that they would at least reject the propos'd Bill for extending the said Acts to Scotland; or, if it be thought fit to allow of such Extension, that then

the said Extension may be carried further, and the Plantations be also, by an equitable Clause in the same bill, permitted to transport their Felons to Scotland.

And your Petitioner, as in Duty bound, shall pray, &c.

This Petition, as I am informed, was not receiv'd by the House, and the Act passed.

On second Thoughts, I am of Opinion, that besides employing our own Vessels, as above propos'd, every English Ship arriving in our Ports with Goods for sale, should be obliged to give Bond, before she is permitted to Trade, engaging that she will carry back to Britain at least one Felon for every Fifty Tons of her Burthen. Thus we shall not only discharge sooner our Debts, but furnish our old Friends with the means of "*better Peopling*," and with more Expedition, their promising new Colony of Botany Bay.

I am yours, &c.

A. Z.

1712. TO JOHN ROSS (A. P. S.)

Philadelphia Jan^y 21, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

You will perceive by the inclosed Letter which I have rec^d from the Board of Treasury, that I am again called on for the Vouchers to your Acc^t with Congress which were produced to Mess. Wharton and Bancroft. Much of this Transaction, which took place as long ago as the Year 1779, has escaped my Memory; and I should be much obliged to you to acquaint me with what you know concerning it; and particularly whether the Vouchers in question remained in my Office, were returned to you, or sent with your Acct.

to this Country. I have made Search for them among the Papers I brought with me from France, but hitherto without Success. — With great Regard

I am Dear Sir,

Your most obed^t & most
humble Servant.

[B. FRANKLIN.]

1713. TO SAMUEL OSGOOD AND WALTER
LIVINGSTON ¹ (A. P. S.)

Jan. 31. 1788.

GENTLEMEN,

Immediately on Receipt of your Letter of the 14th Instant, inclosing Copy of one from Mr. Barclay to you, I ordered a fresh Search to be made for the Papers you require respecting the Vouchers of Mr. Ross's Accounts deposited in my Office when in France; and after the most careful & diligent Examination nothing of the kind is found in my Possession. When I was about to leave that Kingdom I ordered all Papers relating to the Publick Accounts, and every thing deposited with me as Consul, (I having acted in that Capacity before Mr. Barclay's Arrival) to be put into his Hands; which was done. I cannot therefore but be of Opinion, that tho' he may not have taken Notice of those Vouchers, nothing having required his Adverting to them, yet they will be found with the other Papers of his Office when they shall arrive in America. I have however enquired of Mr. Ross whether he cannot supply the Deficiency, who informs me that he has an Authenticated Copy which

¹ Commissioners of the Treasury. — ED.

he is ready to produce if necessary; but as he sent four similar Copies by four different Ships, all of which arrived safe and delivered their respective Cargo's of the Goods to the Commercial Committee, he is confident some of those Copies must still exist, and may be found among the Papers of that Committee. I have the honour to be, with great Regard, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient

& most humble Serv^t

B. F.

1714. TO COUNT DE MOUSTIERS¹ (L. C.)

SIR,

Philad^a Feb. 10, 1788.

The good News of your Excell^y's safe Arrival in this Country, found me confin'd to my Bed by the Bruises of a Fall join'd to a painful Disorder, which has continu'd to harass me till within these few Days. I seize the first Hour of being able to hold a Pen, to congratulate you as I do most sincerely, and to express my Wishes that your Residence among us may be attended with every Circumstance that can make it agreeable to you. The Services of a feeble old Man rendered inactive by the Infirmities of Age, are scarcely worth offering; but if in the Course of your Mission any thing should occur, in which I might be in any degree useful to your Affairs, or to those of the best of Kings & the most beloved of Nations, your Commands will be receiv'd & executed with Pleasure by him, who is with great Respect, Sir

Your Excellency's most obed^t

& most humble Serv^t

B. F.

¹ Eléonore-François-Elie, Comte de Moustiers (1751-1817), Minister Plenipotentiary from the Court of France succeeding Luzerne in the United States, 1787-1789. — ED.

1715. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ (A. P. S.)

Philad^a Feb. 11, 1788.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Your Letter of Sept. 28, 1787, came to my hands but about two Weeks since. It found me very ill with a severe Fit of the Stone, which follow'd a fall I had on the Stone Steps that lead into my Garden, whereby I was much bruised, and my Wrist sprained, so as not to be capable of Writing for several Weeks.¹ I therefore requested Mr. Vaughan to answer it for me, which he has done in his Letter, that I inclose. I will, however, add a little, as my Hand is much strengthened, though I still write with Pain.

All the Books you have sent to me, and to the Philosophical Society here, have been received. They will be acknowledged in our next Volume. In the mean time please to accept our hearty Thanks. There are few Books published in these Times, that contain so much new and useful Knowledge as these you have written.

I lament with you the Prospect of a horrid War, which is likely to engage So great a Part of Mankind. There is little Good gain'd, and so much Mischief done generally, by Wars, that I wish the Imprudence of undertaking them was more evident to princes; in which case I think they would be less frequent. If I were Counsellor of the Empress of Russia, and found that she desired to possess some Part of the Dominions of the Grand Signior, I should advise her to compute

¹ And yet he wrote with his own hand a letter on the 31st of January which shows no trace of injury or infirmity. Ingenhousz's letter of September 28 is in A. P. S. — ED.

what the annual Taxes raised from that Territory may amount to, and make him an Offer of Buying it, at the Rate of Paying for it Twenty Years Purchase. And if I were his Counsellor, I should advise him to take the Money, and cede the Dominion of that Territory. For I am of Opinion, that a War to obtain it will cost her more than that Sum, and the Event uncertain, and that the Defence of it will cost him as much; and, not having embrac'd the offer, his Loss is double. But to make & accept such an Offer, these Potentates should be both of them reasonable Creatures, and free from the Ambition of Glory, which perhaps is too much to be supposed.

I am glad that Peace is likely to be established in your native Country, with so little Expence of Blood, tho' it be done in a manner not agreeable to a great Part of the Nation. If the French had entred with the Prussians, and made it the Seat of War, the Mischief would have been infinite.

I am truly sorry for the Losses you have met with in your Attempts to make Profit by Commerce in this Country. Jonathan Williams was in England and Ireland many Months before I left France. He has since been in different Parts of America, collecting his Debts, and now happens to be here. I have talk'd with him about your Affairs. He tells me, that your Adventure to Carolina sold well, and that the Produce was return'd in Indigo, which, if it had arriv'd, would have render'd good Profit. But the Ship was taken; and tho' his Correspondent had taken the Prudent Precaution to insure in Charleston, the Place being taken soon after, and the Insurers ruined, nothing of Value could be recovered, and that he is himself a Loser of a hundred Guineas by the Share he took in that unfortunate Adventure. I was mistaken when I inform'd you, that his Brother had given him

your Certificates. It was only authenticated Copies of them. These he has now given me. But I have written to John to deliver the Originals to Mr. Charles Vaughan, now in Boston, and to settle your account with that Gentleman, paying to him any Bills that may be in hand, which I make no doubt he will do.

Such Certificates are low in Value at present, but we hope and believe they will mend, when our new projected Constitution of Government is established. I lent to the old Congress £3000 hard money in Value, and took their Certificates promising Interest at 6 per cent, but I have receiv'd no Interest for several Years, and if I were now to sell the Principal, I could not get more than 3s 4d for the Pound which is but a sixth part. You must not ascribe this to want of Honesty in our Government, but to want of Ability; the War having exhausted the Faculties of the Country. The Public Funds even of Great Britain sunk by the War the 3 per cents from 95 to 54. We had powerful Armies of Enemies in our Country, ravaging, plundering, & destroying our Towns, and obstructing our Agriculture, while their Fleets ruined our Commerce; and this for eight Years together. I question, whether the public Credit, even of your rich Country, would have supported itself under similar Treatment. But we are recovering fast, and, if Peace continues, which God grant, we shall soon be in flourishing Circumstances.

I did not think I could have written so much. I have done it, however, a little at a time. I can now only add, that I remain, with unalterable Esteem and Affection, my dear Friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1716. TO MICHEL-GUILLAUME JEAN DE CRÈVE-
CŒUR (L. C.)

Philada, Feb. 16, 1788.

DEAR SIR: — I received from you last Summer and which indeed I ought to have acknowledg'd sooner a most acceptable Present of your excellent Work for which Please to receive my hearty Thanks as well as for the honourable mention you have been so good as to make of me in it. The favourable Sight in which you have so kindly plac'd our Country will I am persuaded have the good Effect of inducing many worthy European characters to remove and settle among us, the Acquisition of whom will be greatly advantageous to us. I thank you also for your care of the Bundle sent me by Mr. Short.

Inclos'd is a Letter for our excellent and most amiable Friend, Mad^e de Houdetot. I wrote to her the beginning of last Year and believing you then in France, I sent it under a Cover directed to you. Your arrival here soon after the Vessels sail'd makes me fear that the Letter may have been long delay'd if not lost. With great & sincere Esteem I am Sir etc.

B. FRANKLIN.

1717. TO M. LE VEILLARD¹ (L. C.)Philada, Feb^y 17, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of June 23d, by Mr. Saugrain, and it is the last of yours that is come to my hands. As you

¹ From an incomplete trans. in L. C. — Ed.

have so much leisure, and love writing, I cannot think you have been so long silent; you, who are so good as to love me, and who know how much pleasure your letters always afford me. I therefore rather suspect you may probably have written something too freely concerning public affairs, and that your letters may be arrested in your postoffice, and yourself lodged in the Bastille. You see I imagine any thing, however extravagant, rather than suppose, as your letters too often do, that my friends forget me.

I find Mr. Saugrain to answer well the good character you give of him, and shall with pleasure render him any services in my power. He is now gone down the Ohio, to reconnoitre that country.¹

I should have proceeded in the history you mention,² if I could well have avoided accepting the chair of President for this third and last year; to which I was again elected by the *unanimous* voice of the Council and General Assembly in November. If I live to see this year expire, I may enjoy some leisure, which I promise you to employ in the work you do me the honour to urge so earnestly.

I sent you with my last a copy of the new Constitution proposed for the United States by the late General Convention. I sent one also to our excellent friend the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. I attended the business of the Convention faith-

¹ Dr. Guillotin, who served with Franklin upon the commission to investigate mesmerism, resolved to remove to America and with a party of twelve to settle in the neighborhood of Louisville, Ky. Picque and Saugrain went ahead to investigate the country. Madame Guillotin was a sister of Saugrain (whose family were book-sellers). See letter to Guillotin, Oct. 23, 1788. — ED.

² The Memoirs of his own Life, to the continuance of which all his friends, who knew the importance of such a history, wished him anxiously to apply. — W. T. F.

fully for four months. Enclosed you have the last speech I made in it. Six States have already adopted the Constitution, and there is now little doubt of its being accepted by a sufficient number to carry it into execution, if not immediately by the whole. It has, however, met with great opposition in some States, for we are at present a nation of politicians. And, though there is a general dread of giving too much power to our *governors*, I think we are more in danger from too little obedience in the *governed*.

We shall, as you suppose, have imposts on trade, and custom-houses, not because other nations have them, but because we cannot at present do without them. We want to discharge our public debt occasioned by the late war. Direct taxes are not so easily levied on the scantily settled inhabitants of our wide-extended country; and what is paid in the price of merchandise is less felt by the consumer, and less the cause of complaint. When we are out of debt we may leave our trade free, for our ordinary charges of government will not be great.

Where there is a free government, and the people make their own laws by their representatives, I see no injustice in their obliging one another to take their own paper money. It is no more so than compelling a man by law to take his own note. But it is unjust to pay strangers with such money against their will. The making of paper money with such a sanction is however a folly, since, although you may by law oblige a citizen to take it for his goods, you cannot fix his prices; and his liberty of rating them as he pleases, which is the same thing as setting what value he pleases on your money, defeats your sanction.

I have been concerned to hear of the troubles in the in-

ternal government of the country I love; ¹ and hope some good may come out of them; and that they may end without mischief.

In your letter to my grandson, you asked some questions that had an appearance as if you meditated a visit to us. Nothing in this world would give me greater pleasure, than to receive and embrace here the whole family; but it is too great a happiness to be expected. This family all join with me in best wishes of every felicity to you and yours; and I remain with unalterable and great esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1718. TO THE EDITORS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA
GAZETTE (L. C.)

On the Abuse of the Press

MESSRS. HALL AND SELLERS,

I lately heard a remark, that on examination of *The Pennsylvania Gazette* for fifty years, from its commencement, it appeared, that, during that long period, scarce one libellous piece had ever appeared in it. This generally chaste conduct of your paper is much to its reputation; for it has long been the opinion of sober, judicious people, that nothing is more likely to endanger the liberty of the press, than the abuse of that liberty, by employing it in personal accusation, detraction, and calumny. The excesses some of our papers have been guilty of in this particular, have set this State in a bad light abroad, as appears by the following letter, which I wish

¹ France. — ED.

you to publish, not merely to show your own disapprobation of the practice, but as a caution to others of the profession throughout the United States. For I have seen a European newspaper, in which the editor, who had been charged with frequently calumniating the Americans, justifies himself by saying, "that he had published nothing disgraceful to us, which he had not taken from our own printed papers."

I am, &c.

A. B.

"New York, March 30, 1788.

"DEAR FRIEND,

"My Gout has at length left me, after five Months' painful Confinement. It afforded me, however, the Leisure to read, or hear read, all the Packets of your various Newspapers, which you so kindly sent for my Amusement.

"Mrs. W. has partaken of it; she likes to read the Advertisements; but she remarks some kind of Inconsistency in the announcing so many Diversions for almost every Evening of the Week, and such Quantities to be sold of expensive Superfluities, Fineries, and Luxuries *just imported*, in a Country, that at the same time fills its Papers with Complaints of *Hard Times*, and Want of Money. I tell her, that such Complaints are common to all Times and all Countries, and were made even in Solomon's Time; when, as we are told, Silver was as plenty in Jerusalem as the Stones in the Street; and yet, even then, there were People who grumbled, so as to incur this Censure from that knowing Prince. '*Say not thou that the former Times were better than these; for thou dost not enquire rightly concerning that matter.*'

"But the Inconsistence that strikes me the most is, that between the Name of your City, Philadelphia, (*Brotherly*

Love,) and the Spirit of Rancour, Malice, and *Hatred* that breathes in its NewsPapers. For I learn from those Papers, that your State is divided into Parties, that each Party ascribes all the public Operations of the other to vicious Motives; that they do not even suspect one another of the smallest Degree of Honesty; that the antifederalists are such, merely from the Fear of losing Power, Places, or Emoluments, which they have in Possession or in Expectation; that the Federalists are a set of *Conspirators*, who aim at establishing a Tyranny over the Persons and Property of their Countrymen, and to live in Splendor on the Plunder of the People. I learn, too, that your Justices of the Peace, tho' chosen by their Neighbours, make a villainous Trade of their Office, and promote Discord to augment Fees, and fleece their Electors; and that this would not be mended by placing the Choice in the Executive Council, who, with interested or party Views, are continually making as improper Appointments; witness a '*petty Fidler, Sycophant, and Scoundrel*,' appointed Judge of the Admiralty; '*an old Woman and Fomentor of Sedition*' to be another of the Judges, and '*a Jeffries*' Chief Justice, &c. &c.; with '*two Harpies*' the Comptroller and Naval Officers, to prey upon the Merchants and deprive them of their Property by Force of Arms, &c.

"I am inform'd also by these Papers, that your General Assembly, tho' the annual choice of the People, shows no Regard to their Rights, but from sinister Views or Ignorance makes Laws in direct Violation of the Constitution, to divest the Inhabitants of their Property and give it to Strangers and Intruders; and that the Council, either fearing the Resentment of their Constituents, or plotting to enslave them, had projected to disarm them, and given Orders for that

purpose; and finally, that your President, the unanimous joint choice of the Council and Assembly, is '*an old Rogue*,' who gave his Assent to the federal Constitution merely to avoid refunding Money he had purloin'd from the United States.

"There is, indeed, a good deal of manifest *Inconsistency* in all this, and yet a Stranger, seeing it in your own Prints, tho' he does not believe it all, may probably believe enough of it to conclude, that Pennsylvania is peopled by a Set of the most unprincipled, wicked, rascally, and quarrelsome Scoundrels upon the Face of the Globe. I have sometimes, indeed, suspected, that those Papers are the Manufacture of foreign Enemies among you, who write with a view of disgracing your Country, and making you appear contemptible and detestable all the World over; but then I wonder at the Indiscretion of your Printers in publishing such Writings! There is, however, one of your *Inconsistencies* that consoles me a little, which is, that tho' *living*, you give one another the characters of Devils; *dead*, you are all Angels! It is delightful, when any of you die, to read what good Husbands, good Fathers, good Friends, good Citizens, and good Christians you were, concluding with a Scrap of Poetry that places you, with certainty, every one in Heaven. So that I think Pennsylvania a good country *to dye in*, though a very bad one *to live in*."

1719. TO MRS. COLLAS¹ (L. C.)

Philada, April 12, 1788.

LOVING COUSIN:—I received some time since a kind Letter from you which gave me Pleasure. As to my coming

¹ A daughter of Mrs. Jane Mecom. — ED.

to Boston, which you seem to wish, and I also, I begin to doubt its being ever accomplish'd. Such a Journey at my Age would be attended with much Inconvenience and Hardship, and might, with the Malady I have be dangerous. At present I am in my Place, have all my Conveniencies and Comforts about me, and it seems most prudent for me to stay where I am and enjoy them, without going abroad to give myself and Friends a good deal of Trouble, which cannot be compensated by our Pleasure of Meeting, since that will be balanc'd by the Pain of Parting.

You need not have made any Apology for introducing Thayer to me. He gave me but little Trouble, and I had the Pleasure of doing him some good; tho' he is rather an insignificant Body, and has turn'd to the Papists, who do not much value the Acquisition, and I suppose we may easily bear the Loss. My best Wishes attend you, being ever your affectionate Uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

1720. TO MADAME BRILLON (L. C.)

Philad^a, April 19, 1788.

MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND:—I received by the last Pacquet your kind Letter dated in October last. I am glad to hear that you continue well, with what is left of the amiable Family, in whose sweet Society I pass'd so many happy Evenings while I liv'd in Passy. I sympathize with you in all your Losses and Afflictions, and hope the rest of your Life will be as tranquil and free from Trouble as it had been for some Years before we parted.

You have given me Pleasure by informing me of the Welfare and present agreeable Circumstances of yourself and Children; and I am persuaded that your Friendship for me will render a similar Account of my Situation pleasing to you. I am in a Country where I have the happiness of being universally respected and beloved, of which three successive annual Elections to the Chief Magistracy, in which Elections the Representatives of the People in Assembly and the Supreme Council join'd and were unanimous, is the strongest Proof; this is a Place of Profit as well as of Honour; and my Friends chearfully assist in making the Business as easy to me as possible. I live in a good House which I built 25 Years ago, contriv'd to my Mind, and made still more convenient by an Addition since my Return. A dutiful and affectionate Daughter, with her Husband and Six Children compose my Family. The Children are all promising, and even the youngest, who is but four Years old, contributes to my Amusement. The eldest, Benjamin, you may remember. He has finish'd his Studies at our University, and is preparing to enter into Business as a Printer, the original Occupation of his Grandfather. Temple, who was likewise with me in France, is settled about 6 Leagues from me on his Plantation, which contains about 600 Acres; but when in Town lives with me. My Rents and Incomes are amply sufficient for all my present Occasions; and if no unexpected Misfortunes happen during the time I have to live, I shall leave a handsome Estate to be divided among my Relatives. As to my Health, it continues the same, or rather better than when I left Passy; but being now in my 83d Year, I do not expect to continue much longer a Sojourner in this World, and begin to promise myself much Gratification of my Curiosity in soon visiting

some other. Wherever I may hereafter travel, be assured, my dear Friend, that if [imperfect].

[B. F.]

1721. TO M. LE VEILLARD (L. C.)

Philadelphia, April 22, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received but a few days since, your favour of November 30th, 1787, in which you continue to urge me to finish the Memoirs. My three years of service will expire in October, when a new president must be chosen; and I had the project of retiring then to my grandson's estate in New Jersey, where I might be free from the interruption of visits, in order to complete that work for your satisfaction; for in this city my time is so cut to pieces by friends and strangers, that I have sometimes envied the prisoners in Bastille. But considering now the little remnant of life I have left, the accidents that may happen between this and October, and your earnest desire, I have come to the resolution to proceed in that work to-morrow, and continue it daily till finished, which, if my health permits, may be in the course of the ensuing summer. As it goes on, I will have a copy made for you, and you may expect to receive a part by the next packet.

It is very possible, as you suppose, that all the articles of the proposed new government will not remain unchanged after the first meeting of the Congress. I am of opinion with you, that the *two* chambers were not necessary, and I disliked some other articles that are in, and wished for some that are not in the proposed plan. I nevertheless hope it may be adopted, though I should have nothing to do with

the execution of it, being determined to quit all public business with my present employment. At eighty-three one certainly has a right to *ambition* repose.

We are not ignorant, that the duties paid at the custom-house on the importation of foreign goods are finally reimbursed by the consumer, but we impose them as the easiest way of levying a tax from those consumers. If our new country was as closely inhabited as your old one, we might without much difficulty collect a land tax, that would be sufficient for all purposes; but where farms are at five or six miles' distance from each other, as they are in a great part of our country, the going of the collectors from house to house to demand the taxes, and being obliged to call more than once for the same tax, makes the trouble of collecting in many cases exceed the value of the sum collected. Things that are practicable in one country are not always so in another, where circumstances differ. Our duties are, however, generally so small, as to give little temptation to smuggling. Believe me ever my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1722. TO MADAME HELVÉTIUS (B. N.)

Philadelphia, April 23, 1788.

I RECEIV'D and read with the greatest Pleasure, my dear friend, the kind Letter you were so good as to write to me with your own hand, *c'est tout à fait charmante*. It rejoiced me to hear that you continu'd well with your *chères petites étoiles* and that you still have your Friends about you. I often think of the Happiness I so long enjoy'd in the sweet Society

of you and them at Auteuil. When we meet in Paradise, as I trust we shall, the Pleasure of that Place will be augmented by our Recollection of all the Circumstances of our Acquaintance here below.

You have made my Daughter very happy by the Things you sent her. They are much admir'd. I continue as well as I have been for some Years past, and if I live six Months longer, I may hope for some Leisure, so as to be able to converse more frequently by Letter with my absent Friends, having absolutely determin'd to engage no more in any public Business after my three Years' Service as President shall expire.

M. Paradise, the Gentleman who will have the Honour of delivering this Letter, intends to reside some time in Paris, and acquaints me that he has ordered some Cardinals to be frequently sent to him from his Estate in Virginia, and that if any of them get to Paris alive you shall be sure to have one. He had the Pleasure of seeing you formerly with me at Passy.

Temple is at his *Terre*, busy with his Agriculture. Benjamin presents his respects. Our best Wishes attend you and yours most devoutly. I am exceedingly oblig'd to the good abbés and M. Cabanis for their Letters. The *Guichets* and *Nouvelle Cométologie* entertain'd my Friends and me very much. I cannot write to them now, but must say with the Debtor in the Gospel: *Have patience with me and I will pay you all.* Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1723. TO JOSEPH-IGNACE GUILLOTIN (L. C.)

Philad^a, May 4, 1788.

It is with great Concern that I communicate to you the Intelligence contain'd in the enclos'd Paper. For tho' the Name of two of the French Gentlemen are not mentioned, I have reason to fear they were our two Friends:¹ I suppose they informed you in their late Letters, that they were prevented from going down the Ohio last Autumn by the Freezing of the River before their Boat was ready. - They were thereby detain'd at Fort Pitt all Winter; and in their last Letter to me they acquainted me that the Ice being now gone they should soon proceed, and desired the Letters coming to my hands for them, might remain with me till I should hear from them, and receive Directions where to send them. Your two last accordingly are still in my Hands. We have as yet no farther Account of this melancholy Event, and therefore do not yet know whether the Gentleman said to have escaped to the Shore, tho' badly wounded, still survives. I hope to hear that he is recovered. It seems they were unprovided with Arms to defend themselves. Indeed Travelling on the Ohio has for some Years past been thought as safe as on any River in France, so that there was not the least Suspicion of Danger, many Thousands of People having gone down that way to the new Settlements at Kentucke. I condole with you most sincerely on the unfortunate Accident. They were two young Men of uncommon Knowledge and most amiable Manners, so that I have scarce ever met with Persons for

¹ Picque and Saugrain. See letter to M. le Veillard, February 17, 1788.
— ED.

whom I had in so short an Acquaintance so much Esteem and Affection. M^r Pique deposited in my "Hands" thirty Louis d'ors and some Silver Spoons and Forks, which will be delivered to him if living, or to his Representative. I have the Honour to be with great Regard, Sir

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1724. TO THE PRINCESS DASHKOW (L. C.)

Philad^a, May 7, 1788.

MADAME

It gave me great Pleasure to hear, that your magnanimous Empress had plac'd you at the Head of your Academy of Sciences.¹ It was doing Honour to Learning. With this you will receive the second Volume of the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, who hope it may be favourably accepted as a Testimony of their Respect for yours. With great & sincere Esteem & Respect, I am,

Madam

Y. m. o. &c [B. F.]

1725. TO REV. JOHN LATHROP² (L. C.)

Philad^a, May 31, 1788.

REVEREND SIR,

I received your obliging Favour of the 6th Inst³ by Mr.

¹ At St. Petersburg. — ED.

² An eminent clergyman of Boston, and for many years a neighbour and valuable friend of Mrs. Mecom, the sister of Dr. Franklin. — S.

³ In A. P. S. — ED.

Hilliard,¹ with whose Conversation I was much pleased, and would have been glad to have had more of if, it he could have spar'd it to me; but the short time of his stay has prevented. You need make no apology for introducing any of your friends to me. I consider it as doing me Honour, as well as giving me Pleasure.

I thank you for the pamphlet of the Humane Society. In return please to accept one of the same kind, which was published while I resided in France. If your Society have not hitherto seen it, it may possibly afford them useful Hints.

It would certainly, as you observe, be a very great Pleasure to me, if I could once again visit my Native Town, and walk over the Grounds I used to frequent when a Boy, and where I enjoyed many of the innocent Pleasures of Youth, which would be so brought to my Remembrance, and where I might find some of my old Acquaintance to converse with. But when I consider how well I am situated here, with every thing about me, that I can call either necessary or convenient; the fatigues and bad accommodations to be met with and suffered in a land journey, and the unpleasantness of sea voyages, to one, who, although he has crossed the Atlantic eight times, and made many smaller trips, does not recollect his having ever been at sea without taking a firm resolution never to go to sea again; and that, if I were arrived in Boston, I should see but little of it, as I could neither bear walking nor riding in a carriage over its pebbled streets; and, above all, that I should find very few indeed of my old friends living, it being now sixty-five years since I left it to settle here; — all this considered, I say, it seems probable, though

¹ A clergyman, and successor to the venerable Dr. Appleton in the ministry at Cambridge. — ED.

not certain, that I shall hardly again visit that beloved place. But I enjoy the company and conversation of its inhabitants, when any of them are so good as to visit me; for, besides their general good sense, which I value, the Boston manner, turn of phrase, and even tone of voice, and accent in pronunciation, all please, and seem to refresh and revive me.

¹ I have been long impressed with the same sentiments you so well express, of the growing felicity of mankind, from the improvements in philosophy, morals, politics, and even the conveniences of common living, by the invention and acquisition of new and useful utensils and instruments, that I have sometimes almost wished it had been my destiny to be born two or three centuries hence. For invention and improvement are prolific, and beget more of their kind. The present progress is rapid. Many of great importance, now unthought of, will before that period be produced; and then I might not only enjoy their advantages, but have my curiosity gratified in knowing what they are to be. I see a little absurdity in what I have just written, but it is to a friend, who will wink and let it pass, while I mention one reason more for such a wish, which is, that, if the art of physic shall be improved in proportion with other arts, we may then be able to avoid diseases, and live as long as the patriarchs in Genesis; to which I suppose we should make little objection.

I am glad my dear sister has so good and kind a neighbour. I sometimes suspect she may be backward in acquainting me with circumstances in which I might be more useful to her. If any such should occur to your observation, your mentioning them to me will be a favour I shall be thankful

¹ The conclusion of this letter is quoted in a letter from Lathrop to Dr. Lettsom. See "Life of Lettsom," Vol. II, p. 450. — ED.

for. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Reverend
Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

1726. TO JAMES BOWDOIN¹ (L. C.)

*Queries and Conjectures relating to Magnetism and the Theory
of the Earth*

Philad^a May 31, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

I received your Favours by Messrs. Gore, Hilliard, and Lee, with whose Conversation I was much pleased, and wished for more of it; but their stay with us was too short. Whenever you recommend any of your Friends to me, you oblige me.

I want to know whether your Philosophical Society² receiv'd the second Volume of our Transactions. I sent it, but never heard of its arriving. If it miscarried, I will send another. Has your Society among its Books the French work *Sur les Arts et les Métiers*? It is voluminous, well executed, and may be useful in our country. I have bequeath'd it them in my will; but if they have it already, I will substitute something else.

Our ancient Correspondence used to have something Philosophical in it. As you are now more free from public Cares, and I expect to be so in a few Months, why may we not resume that kind of Correspondence? Our much regretted Friend Winthrop once made me the Compliment, that I was good at starting Game for Philosophers; let me try if I can start a little for you.

¹ Read at a meeting of The American Philosophical Society, January 15, 1790. — ED.

² The American Academy of Arts and Sciences. — ED.

Has the question, how came the Earth by its Magnetism, ever been consider'd?

Is it likely that *Iron Ore* immediately existed when this globe was first form'd; or may it not rather be suppos'd a gradual Production of Time?

If the Earth is at present magnetical in virtue of the Masses of Iron Ore contain'd in it, might not some Ages pass before it had magnetic polarity?

Since Iron Ore may exist without that Polarity, and by being plac'd in certain Circumstances may obtain it from an external Cause, is it not possible that the Earth received its Magnetism from some such Cause?

In short, may not a magnetic Power exist throughout our System, perhaps thro' all Systems, so that if Men could make a Voyage in the Starry Regions, a Compass might be of Use? And may not such universal Magnetism, with its uniform Direction be serviceable in keeping the diurnal Revolution of a Planet more steady to the same Axis?

Lastly, as the Poles of Magnets may be changed by the Presence of stronger Magnets, might not, in ancient Times, the near Passing of some large Comet, of greater magnetic Power than this Globe of ours, have been a means of changing its Poles, and thereby wrecking and deranging its Surface, placing in different Regions the Effect of centrifugal Force, so as to raise the Waters of the Sea in some, while they were depress'd in others?

Let me add another Question or two, not relating indeed to Magnetism, but, however, to the Theory of the Earth.

Is not the finding of great Quantities of Shells and Bones of Animals (natural to hot Climates) in the cold ones of our present World, some proof that its Poles have been changed?

Is not the Supposition, that the Poles have been changed, the easiest way of accounting for the Deluge, by getting rid of the old Difficulty how to dispose of its Waters after it was over? Since, if the Poles were again to be changed, and plac'd in the present Equator, the Sea would fall there about 15 Miles in height, and rise as much in the present polar Regions; and the Effect would be proportionable, if the new Poles were plac'd anywhere between the present and the Equator.

Does not the apparent Wrack of the Surface of this Globe thrown up into long Ridges of Mountains, with Strata in various Positions, make it probable, that its internal Mass is a Fluid; but a Fluid so dense as to float the heaviest of our Substances? Do we know the Limit of Condensation Air is capable of? Supposing it to grow denser *within* the Surface, in the same Proportion nearly as it does *without*, at what Depth may it be equal in Density with Gold?

Can we easily conceive how the Strata of the Earth could have been so derang'd, if it had not been a mere shell supported by a heavier Fluid? Would not such a suppos'd internal fluid Globe be immediately sensible of a Change in the Situation of the earth's Axis, alter its Form, and thereby burst the Shell, and throw up Parts of it above the rest? As if we would alter the Position of the Fluid contain'd in the Shell of an Egg, and place its longest Diameter where the shortest now is, the Shell must break; but would be much harder to break, if the whole internal Substance were as solid and hard as the Shell.

Might not a Wave, by any means rais'd in this supposed internal Ocean of extreamly dense Fluid, raise in some degree, as it passes the present Shell of incumbent Earth,

and break it in some Places, as in Earthquakes? And may not the Progress of such Wave, and the Disorders it occasions among the Solids of the Shell, account for the rumbling Sound being first heard at a distance, augmenting as it approaches, and gradually dying away as it proceeds? A Circumstance observ'd by the Inhabitants of South America in their last great Earthquake, that Noise coming from a Place some Degrees north of Lima, and being trac'd by enquiry quite down to Buenos Ayres, proceeded regularly from North to South at the rate of Leagues per minute, as I was inform'd by a very ingenious Peruvian whom I met with at Paris.

I am ever, my very dear friend, yours most affectionately,
B. FRANKLIN.

1727. TO MATHER BYLES¹ (L. C.)

Philad^a June 1, 1788.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

I duly received your kind Letter of May 14, 87.² I was then busily engag'd in attending our General Convention, which, added to the ordinary current Business of this Government, took up so much of my Time, that I was oblig'd to postpone answering many Letters of Friends which gave occasion of mislaying some of them, & among those was yours, only last Week come again to hand. I think I never receiv'd that you mention respecting the University of

¹ A clergyman of Boston. For some biographical anecdotes respecting him, see Tudor's "Life of James Otis," pp. 155-160. — S.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

Aberdeen,¹ but the Good will I might show on that Occasion was not of Importance enough to deserve your repeating the Acknowledgment. It was in me only paying a Debt; for I remember with Gratitude, that I owe one of my first Academical Honours to your Recommendation.

It gives me much Pleasure to understand that my Points have been of Service in the Protection of you & yours. I wish for your sake, that Electricity had really prov'd what it was at first suppos'd to be, a Cure for the Palsy. It is however happy for you, that, when Old Age and that Malady have concurr'd to infeeble you, and to disable you for Writing, you have a Daughter at hand to nurse you with filial Attention, and to be your Secretary, of which I see she is very capable, by the Elegance and Correctness of her Writing in the Letter I am now answering. I too have a Daughter, who lives with me and is the Comfort of my declining Years, while my Son is estrang'd from me by the Part he took in the late War, and keeps aloof, residing in England, whose Cause he *espous'd*; whereby the old Proverb is exemplified;

“ My Son is my Son till he take him a Wife;
But my Daughter's my Daughter all Days of her Life.”

I remember you had a little Collection of Curiosities. Please to honour with a Place in it the inclos'd Medal, which I got struck in Paris. The Thought was much approv'd by the Connoisseurs there, and the Engraving well executed. My best Wishes attend you, being ever your affectionate Friend & humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ “It is long since I had the Pleasure of writing you by Mr. Edward Church, to thank you for your friendly mention of me in a Letter that I find was transmitted to the University of Aberdeen, I suspect whether you ever received it.” Byles to Franklin, May 14, 1787. — ED.

1728. TO M. LE VEILLARD¹ (P. C.)

Philadelphia, June 8, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received a few days ago your kind letter of the 3d of January. The *arrêt* in favour of the *non-catholiques* gives pleasure here, not only from its present advantages, but as it is a good step towards general toleration, and to the abolishing in time all party spirit among Christians, and the mischiefs that have so long attended it. Thank God, the world is growing wiser and wiser; and as by degrees men are convinced of the folly of wars for religion, for dominion, or for commerce, they will be happier and happier.

Eight States have now agreed to the proposed new constitution; there remain five who have not yet discussed it; their appointed times of meeting not being yet arrived. Two are to meet this month, the rest later. One more agreeing, it will be carried into execution. Probably some will not agree at present, but time may bring them in; so that we have little doubt of it becoming general, perhaps with some corrections. As to your friend's taking a share in the management of it, his age and infirmities render him unfit for the business, as the business would be for him. After the expiration of his presidentship, which will now be in a few months, he is *determined* to engage no more in public affairs, even if required; but his countrymen will be too reasonable to require it. You are not so considerate; you are a hard task-master. You insist on his writing *his life*, already a long work,

¹ This letter was sold at Sotheby's, May 12, 1905. I do not know in whose collection it now is. — ED.

and at the same time would have him continually employed in augmenting the subject, while the time shortens in which the work is to be executed. General Washington is the man that all our eyes are fixed on for *President*, and what little influence I may have, is devoted to him. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1729. TO DUPONT DE NEMOURS

Philadelphia, June 9, 1788.

SIR,

I have received your favour of December 31st, with the extract of a letter, which you wish to have translated and published here. But seven States having, before it arrived, ratified the new constitution, and others being daily expected to do the same, after the fullest discussion in convention, and in all the public papers, till everybody was tired of the argument, it seemed too late to propose delay, and especially the delay that must be occasioned by a revision and correction of all the separate Constitutions. For it would take at least a year to convince thirteen States, that the Constitutions they have practised ever since the Revolution, without observing any imperfections in them so great as to be worth the trouble of amendment, are nevertheless so ill formed as to be unfit for continuation, or to be parts of a federal government. And, when they should be so convinced, it would probably take some years more to make the corrections.

An eighth State has since acceded, and when a ninth is added, which is now daily expected, the constitution will be carried into execution. It is probable, however, that, at the first meeting of the new Congress, various amendments

will be proposed and discussed, when I hope your *Ouvrage sur les Principes et le Bien des Républiques en général*, &c. &c., may be ready to put into their hands; and such a work from your hand I am confident, though it may not be entirely followed, will afford useful hints, and produce advantages of importance.

But we must not expect, that a new government may be formed, as a game of chess may be played, by a skilful hand, without a fault. The players of our game are so many, their ideas so different, their prejudices so strong and so various, and their particular interests, independent of the general, seeming so opposite, that not a move can be made that is not contested; the numerous objections confound the understanding; the wisest must agree to some unreasonable things, that reasonable ones of more consequence may be obtained; and thus chance has its share in many of the determinations, so that the play is more like *tric-trac* with a box of dice.

We are much pleased with the disposition of your government to favour our commerce, manifested in the late *règlement*. You appear to be possessed of a *truth*, which few governments are possessed of, that A must take some of B's produce, otherwise B will not be able to pay for what he would take of A. But there is one thing wanting to facilitate and augment our intercourse. It is a dictionary, explaining the names of different articles of manufacture in the two languages. When I was in Paris, I received a large order for a great variety of goods, particularly of the kind called hard wares, that is, wares of iron and steel; and when I showed the invoice to your manufacturers, they did not understand what kind of goods or instruments were meant by the names; nor could any English and French dictionary be found to

explain them. So I sent to England for one of each sort, which might serve both as explanation and as a model, the latter being of importance likewise, since people are prejudiced in favour of *forms* they have been used to, though perhaps not the best. They cost me twenty-five guineas, but were lost by the way, and, the peace coming on, the scheme dropped. It would, however, as I imagine, be well worth reviving, for our merchants say, we still send to England for such goods as we want, because there they understand our orders, and can execute them precisely. With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1730. TO MATHEW CAREY (A. P. S.)

June 10. 1788

SIR

In answer to your Request of this Day, —

I do not recollect ever to have seen a Recommendation of the kind you propose of any such periodical Compilation. It seems to me quite a novel Idea, and not likely to be useful as it might appear to the Public impertinent. They have now seen the Work carry'd on more than a Year; They are competent Judges whether it answers their purpose or their Expectations. — Such a Work if well executed, recommends itself, and needs no other Recommendation; and if not well executed, will not be help'd by any other, whoever it may be sign'd by, — As a principal Use of it is to preserve fugitive Pieces; I think you would do well not to fill any part of it with Extracts from Collections already made such as the Philos. Transactions where they are already preserv'd. I

send you enclos'd a Note of the Value of Provisions 34 years ago in Philad^a & Boston, which perhaps may be proper to be preserved in your Work, and am looking out for others of more. I was always dispos'd to be serviceable to you, tho' it seems I was once unlucky.¹

[B. F.]

“May it please your excellency,

“With uncommon exertions, and the most indefatigable application, I have carried on the *Museum* for nearly a year and a half — and considering how incredibly small my capital was, at the commencement, my success has been uncommon yet not so great, as under particular circumstances, I might have expected, and would probably have met with. I have now a plan in agitation, which, with your concurrence, and that of a few other respectable Characters, will, in all likelihood, insure me that reward to which honest industry, in a good cause, has so just and undeniable a claim.

“This leads me to the object of the present application. The favour I so earnestly request, is, to subscribe such a declaration or recommendation of the *American Museum*, as its merits may entitle it to; a form of which I subjoin for your perusal:

“We the subscribers, having carefully examined the tendency and purpose of the *American Museum*, published by Mathew Carey, of Philadelphia, are of opinion, that it is a very useful work, calculated to disseminate agricultural, political, and other valuable information, in a degree and manner hardly attainable without a publication of that kind — and more especially to preserve various interesting docu-

¹ This letter was in reply to the following request in a note from Carey dated Philadelphia, June 10, 1788. — ED.

ments from oblivion. We therefore chearfully recommend it to the countenance and patronage of the public in general."

"Perhaps this character of the work is too panegyrical. It is, however, that which I have had from numbers of the most impartial, intelligent, and well informed gentlemen. But at all events, I am not scrupulously attached to the manner of expression.

"I hope and trust there is no necessity to make use of many arguments on this occasion. I have read a declaration of yours, that your own experience of the difficulties attendant on beginners, always strongly inclined you in favour of those in that situation. True, I am not, strictly speaking, a beginner — but every inducement in favour of that description, exists with me.

"Your compliance with this request, will be regarded as a most important obligation, by

"Your excellency's most obedient

"and very humble servant

"MATHEW CAREY."

1731. TO JOHN JAY

(A. P. S.)

Philad^a June 27. 1788

DEAR SIR,

In arranging some old Papers I lately found the enclos'd Letter from Mr. Blunt, enclosing Copy of a Certificate of Comm^r. Jones in favour of John Jackson. I ought, (tho' so long delay'd) to send some Answer. Can you inform me whether any thing has been done for Jackson in consequence of the Commadore's Promise?

I send you also two other Papers respecting Services for-

merly done the U. S. by Mr. Limousin of Havre, and M. Milliet of Lisbon; for your Consideration; and to be dispos'd of as you shall think proper. Please to inform me whether Dohrman is still in America. With great & sincere Esteem, I am ever, my dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately

B. FRANKLIN.

1732. TO GEORGE CLINTON¹

Philad. July 10, 1788

SIR,

I beg leave once more to introduce to your Excellency,² the honourable Mr Redick, a Member of the Supreme Executive Council of the State of Pennsylvania, who is charg'd by that Council with some important Matters to communicate to, and consult upon with your Excellency, respecting the outrageous Conduct of our disorderly People inhabiting near the Borders of our two States, which if not speedily and effectually repress'd, it is apprehended may occasion much Inconvenience and Mischief. I request your Excellency to give Mr Redick a favourable Audience, and to afford him your best Counsels, which will be very obliging to this Government, and particularly to

Your Excellency's most obedient and most
humble Servant

B FRANKLIN
Presid^t.

¹ From the original in Charles Roberts's Collection of Autographs, Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania. — ED.

² He was governor of New York. — ED.

1733. TO BENJAMIN CHAMBERS, AND THE
OTHER GENTLEMEN OF CHAMBERSBURGH
(L. C.)

Philad^a, September 20, 1788.

GENTLEMEN: — I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me, respecting what was supposed a new Invention, the blowing of Furnaces by a Fall of Water. When Mr. Zantzinger deliver'd me your Letter, I told him that I had several Books in my Library which describ'd the same Contrivance, and I have since shown them to him. They are the "French *Encyclopedia* or Dictionary of Arts and Sciences"; Swedenborg's Latin Treatise of Iron Works; and the French work "Des Arts et des Métiers," in the Article of Forges. Those Descriptions are all accompanied with Figures in Copper Plate, which demonstrate the Invention to be the same precisely in all its essential Parts; and in the Accounts of it, it is said to have been first practised in Italy about 100 Years since; whence it was brought into France, where it is now much us'd; thence into Sweden and Germany: and I remember to have been informed by a Spaniard who was here forty Years ago, and gave me a Drawing of it, that it was practis'd in some parts of Mexico, in their Furnaces for smelting their Silver Ore. This being the case, you see, Gentlemen that Mr. M^cClintock cannot properly be recommended to the Assembly as the Discoverer of something new. It is, however, not an uncommon thing for ingenious Men in different Ages, as well as in different Countries, to hit upon the same Contrivance without knowing or having heard what has been done by others; and Mr. M^cClintock has at least the Merit

of having introduc'd the Knowledge of this useful Invention into this Part of America, and of demonstrating by his own Example its Practicability.

I am, gentlemen, with great Regard, your most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1734. *TO THE DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD*
(L. C.)

Philad^a [Oct. 22, 1788]

I received and read with great Pleasure, my dear and much respected Friend, your Letter of the 12th July. It gave me a more clear and most satisfactory Acc^t of the present State of Affairs in your Country than any I have been able to obtain. You justly suppose they must be interesting to me. I love France, I have 1000 Reasons for doing so: And whatever promotes or impedes her Happiness affects me as if she were my Mother. I hope all will end to the general Advantage.

Having now finish'd my Term of being President, and promising myself to engage no more in public Business, I hope to enjoy the small Remains of Life that are allow'd me, in the Repose I have so long wish'd for. I purpose to so employ it in compleating the personal History you mention. It is now brought down to my Fiftieth Year. What is to follow will be of more important Transactions: But it seems to me that what is done will be of more general Use to young Readers; as exemplifying strongly the Effects of prudent and imprudent Conduct in the Commencement of a Life of Business.

Our public Affairs begin to wear a more quiet Aspect. The Disputes about the Faculty of the new Constitution are sub-

sided. The first Congress will probably mend the principal ones, & future Congresses the rest. That which you mention did not pass unnoticed in the Convention. Many, if I remember right, were for making the President incapable of being chosen after the first four Years; but a Majority were for leaving the Election free to chuse whom they pleas'd; and it was alledged that such Incapability might tend to make the President less attentive to the duties of his Office, and to the Interests of the People, than he would be if a second Choice depended on their good Opinion of them. We are making Experiments in Politicks; what Knowledge we shall gain by them will be more certain, tho' perhaps we may hazard too much in that Mode of acquiring it.

I thank you much for the Dissertation sur la Nyctalopie. It was quite a Novelty to me, having never before heard of such a Malady. One of our most ancient Physicians assures me; that tho' he had some knowledge of the Distemper from his Reading, he never knew an Instance of it in any Part of North America. Indeed we have no Chalk in this Country, nor any Soil so white as to dazzle the Eyes when the Sun's Light is reflected from it. The Dissertation mentions that there are *terres crétacées*, &c. Are those *terres* white?

Be pleased to make my Respects acceptable to Mad^e la Duchesse d'Enville, whose many Civilities and Kindnesses to me when in France, I shall ever remember with Gratitude. My best Wishes attend you and all that are dear to you. May I here desire to be remembered kindly to the Marquis de Condorcet & l'Abbé Roshen? With the greatest & most sincere Esteem and Respect, I am, ever,

Your obliged & most obedient Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

I enclose for your Amusement the only Paper I wrote in the Controversy.

1735. TO MISS FLAINVILLE (L. C.)

Philad^a Oct. 23, 1788

MA CHERE ENFANT

If I could write French as well as you do English, I would continue in that Language. The Proficiency you have made astonishes me. I lament with you the Death of that dear good Woman, Mad^e Dutartre, and am concern'd for the other Misfortunes you have met with: Do not let them discourage you. You are still young and have many valuable Talents, and an amiable Disposition proper to procure new Friends, and you may yet see better Days. M. de Warville did me a great Pleasure in delivering to me your kind Letter. He is a most valuable Man, and I hope his Travels among us will be to his Satisfaction. I have been harassed with Illness this last Summer, am grown old, near 83, and find myself very infirm, so that I expect to be soon call'd for; and you may, my dear Child, consider this Line as taking Leave, which I do with sincere Wishes for your Prosperity & Happiness, being with a very affectionate Regard,

Your loving Papa

B. FRANKLIN.

1736. TO MADAME LAVOISIER¹ (L. C.)

Philadelphia, October 23, 1788.

I HAVE a long time been disabled from writing to my dear friend, by a severe fit of the gout, or I should sooner have

¹ The original letter is in the Paris Archives. Madame Lavoisier was a

returned my thanks for her very kind present of the portrait, which she has herself done me the honour to make of me. It is allowed by those, who have seen it, to have great merit as a picture in every respect; but what particularly endears it to me is the hand that drew it. Our English enemies, when they were in possession of this city and my house, made a prisoner of my portrait, and carried it off with them, leaving that of its companion, my wife, by itself, a kind of widow. You have replaced the husband, and the lady seems to smile as well pleased.

It is true, as you observe, that I enjoy here every thing that a reasonable mind can desire, a sufficiency of income, a comfortable habitation of my own building, having all the conveniences I could imagine; a dutiful and affectionate daughter to nurse and take care of me, a number of promising grandchildren, some old friends still remaining to converse with, and more respect, distinction, and public honours than I can possibly merit. These are the blessings of God, and depend on his continued goodness; yet all do not make me forget Paris, and the nine years' happiness I enjoyed there, in the sweet society of a people whose conversation is instructive, whose manners are highly pleasing, and who, above all the nations of the world, have, in the greatest perfection, the art of making themselves beloved by strangers. And now, even in my sleep, I find, that the scenes of all my pleasant dreams are laid in that city, or in its neighbourhood.

I like much young M. Dupont. He appears a very sensible

daughter of M. Paulze, one of the "farmers general." She was married to Lavoisier (1743-1794) in 1771, and after his death upon the revolutionary scaffold she married (1804) Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford (1753-1814). — ED.

and valuable man, and I think his father will have a great deal of satisfaction in him.

Please to present my thanks to M. Lavoisier for the *Nomenclature Chimique* he has been so good as to send me, (it must be a very useful book,) and assure him of my great and sincere esteem and attachment. My best wishes attend you both; and I think I cannot wish you and him greater happiness, than a long continuance of the connexion. With great regard and affection, I have the honour to be, my dear friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

1737. TO JOSEPH-IGNACE GUILLOTIN¹

Philad^a Oct. 23, 1788.

SIR

I received your Letter of July 1. with its Duplicate.² I lament with you most sincerely the loss of poor Mr. Pique. The Money he deposited in my Hands was Thirty Louis d'ors, which I have delivered to Mr. Saugrain, as you will see by his Receipt enclos'd. No one has hitherto demanded of me the *Couverts d'argent*; but I shall deliver them to whoever produces a proper Authority to receive them. I apprehend there is some Mistake in the Name you mention, and that they were not for a Mr. John Barclay: But

¹ From the original in the possession of the Chicago Historical Society. Guillotin (1738-1814) was a notable physician, professor of anatomy, physiology, and pathology in Paris. He assisted Franklin and Lavoisier in preparing the report of the Academy of Sciences upon the investigation of Mesmerism. See Introduction, Vol. I, p. 115, and letter to M. le Veillard, Feb. 17, 1788. — ED.

² In A. P. S. — ED.

M. Darcet¹ can set the matter right. Mr. Pique's Death happening in a Wilderness Country where there were no settled Inhabitants it is not possible to obtain such a thing as an *Extrait mortuare*. M. Saugrain, on whose safe Return I congratulate you, will supply that Deficiency by his Testimony taken with you. With great Esteem, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient & most

humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1738. TO JAN INGENHOUSZ²

Philadelphia, October 24, 1788.

. . . YOU have always been kind enough to interest yourself in what relates to my health. I ought therefore to acquaint you with what appears to me something curious respecting it. You may remember the cutaneous malady, I formerly complained of, and for which you and Dr. Pringle favoured me with prescriptions and advice. It vexed me near fourteen years, and was, the beginning of this year, as bad as ever, covering almost my whole body, except my face and hands; when a fit of the gout came on, without very much pain, but a swelling in both feet, which at last appeared also in both knees, and then in my hands. As these swellings increased and extended, the other malady diminished, and at length disappeared entirely. Those swellings have some time since begun to fall, and are now almost gone; perhaps the

¹ M. d'Arcet, member of the Academy of Sciences and a professor of Chemistry, was a member of the Commission to investigate Mesmerism. — ED.

² From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 242. — ED.

cutaneous disease may return, or perhaps it is worn out. I may hereafter let you know what happens. I am on the whole much weaker than when it began to leave me. But possibly that may be the effect of age, for I am now near eighty-three, the age of commencing decrepitude.

I grieve at the wars Europe is engaged in, and wish they were ended; for I fear even the victors will be losers. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Our public affairs are drawing towards a settlement. I have served out the three years' term of my presidency, limited by the Constitution; and, being determined to engage no more in public business, I hope, if health permits, to be a better correspondent. We have no philosophical news here at present, except that a boat moved by a steam engine rows itself against tide in our river, and it is apprehended the construction may be so simplified and improved as to become generally useful.¹

1739. TO DUPONT DE NEMOURS (L. C.)

Philad^a Oct. 24, 1788

DEAR SIR,

I think I mentioned to you in my last the Utility of forming a little Dictionary of the Terms by which the different Articles of Manufacture are designated in our two Languages. Such a Dictionary would in my Opinion greatly facilitate the Correspondence and Commerce between the two Countries. At present if one of our Merchants should send an Invoice

¹ Alluding to Fitch's steamboat. — ED.

to France for a Variety of Goods he formerly had from England, the Terms he would use must be unintelligible. This I experienced when at Paris. The Congress sent me an Order for a great Quantity of Merchandize, I show'd the Invoice, but it was not understood and I could not explain it. At length I took the Resolution of sending to England for one of each Article, which would not only explain what was wanted, but serve as a Model for your Workmen to imitate; as People accustomed to Forms of Tools &c. do not like those that are different tho' perhaps better. I enclose a Copy of the Particulars sent for. They were purchased accordingly and sent by way of Ostend: But unfortunately a Package containing one half of them, was unaccountably lost between that Place and Paris; and the subsequent long Delay in Expectation of Recovering that Package, which was never done, prevented the Execution of the Scheme. I would now recommend it to your Consideration, whether it would not be well for your Government to send for those Models, put them into the Hands of your Workmen, and then acquaint us with the French Names for them. Those purchas'd for me by the enclos'd Invoice, cost but 25 Guineas. I am persuaded that many of them might be manufactur'd cheaper in France than they are in England, and as Britain lays so many Restraints on our Trade, we should chuse rather to supply ourselves from you.

Our Disputes about the New Constitution are almost subsided, and we are proceeding fast towards good Order. I hope all the late Differences in Opinion on public Affairs will end well, with you as well as with us. With great & sincere Esteem, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant

B. FRANKLIN.

1740. TO M. LE VEILLARD

Philadelphia, October 24, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have lately received your two kind letters of June 18th and August 6th. I do not find that I ever received those you mention of the 15th September.

I have been much afflicted the last summer with a long-continued fit of the gout, which I am not quite clear of, though much better; my other malady is not augmented. I have lately made great progress in the work you so urgently demand, and have come as far as my fiftieth year. Being now free from public business, as my term in the presidentship is expired, and resolving to engage in no other public employment, I expect to have it finished in about two months, if illness or some unforeseen interruption does not prevent. I do not therefore send a part at this time, thinking it better to retain the whole till I can view it all together, and make the proper corrections.

I am much concerned to hear the broils in your country, but hope they will lead to its advantage.

When this fermentation is over and the troubling parts subsided, the wine will be fine and good, and cheer the hearts of those who drink it.

Our affairs mend daily and are getting into good order very fast. Never was any measure so thoroughly discussed as our proposed new Constitution. Many objections were made to it in the public papers, and answers to these objections. Much party heat there was, and some violent personal abuse. I kept out of the dispute, and wrote only one

little paper on the occasion which I enclose. You seem to me to be so apprehensive about our President's being perpetual. Neither he nor we have any such intention. What danger there may be of such an event we are all aware of, and shall take care effectually to prevent it. The choice is from four years to four years; the appointments will be small; thus we may change our President if we don't like his conduct, and he will have less inducement to struggle for a new election. As to the two chambers, I am of your opinion that one alone would be better; but, my dear friend, nothing in human affairs and schemes is perfect; and perhaps that is the case of our opinions.

It must have been a terrible tempest that devastated such an extent of country. I have sometimes thought that it might be well to establish an office of insurance for farms against the damage that may occur to them from storms, blight, insects, etc. A small sum paid by a number would repair such losses and prevent much poverty and distress.

Our adventurous merchants are hitherto successful in the East India trade. Perhaps it would be better for us if we used none of the commodities of those countries, but since we do use them, it is an advantage that we have them cheaper than when they come through Britain. As to the other merchandise she formerly supplied us with, our demand is daily diminishing. Our people are more and more sensible of the mischievous consequences of drinking rum; the leaders of several religious sects have warned their people against it, and the consumption has this last year been less by one third. This will affect her islands. And the restraints she has laid on our trade have contributed to raise a spirit of industry

in families, who now manufacture more than ever for themselves; that must lessen greatly the importation.

Embrace for me bien tendrement your good dame and children. With sincere esteem and hearty attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The wine is arriv'd, but it was not well secured or bottled. One of the casks had leaked a great deal, and the case we have opened had two thirds of the bottles empty or broken. Temple is in the country; he has received your letters, but does not know of this opportunity.

1741. TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN¹

Philadelphia, October 24, 1788.

. . . HAVING now finished my term in the Presidentship, and resolving to engage no more in public affairs, I hope to be a better correspondent for the little time I have to live. I am recovering from a long-continued gout, and am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life, to the doing of which the persuasions contained in your letter of January 31st, 1783, have not a little contributed. I am now in the year 1756, just before I was sent to England. To shorten the work, as well as for other reasons, I omit all facts and transactions, that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader, by showing him from my example, and my success in emerging from poverty, and acquiring some degree of wealth,

¹ From "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 243. — ED.

power, and reputation, the advantages of certain modes of conduct which I observed, and of avoiding the errors which were prejudicial to me. If a writer can judge properly of his own work, I fancy, on reading over what is already done, that the book will be found entertaining, interesting, and useful, more so than I expected when I began it. If my present state of health continues, I hope to finish it this winter. When done, you shall have a manuscript copy of it, that I may obtain from your judgment and friendship such remarks, as may contribute to its improvement.

The violence of our party debates about the new Constitution seems much abated, indeed almost extinct, and we are getting fast into good order. I kept out of those disputes pretty well, having wrote only one little piece, which I send you enclosed.

I regret the immense quantity of misery brought upon mankind by this Turkish war; and I am afraid the King of Sweden may burn his fingers by attacking Russia. When will princes learn arithmetic enough to calculate, if they want pieces of one another's territory, how much cheaper it would be to buy them, than to make war for them, even though they were to give a hundred years' purchase? But, if glory cannot be valued, and therefore the wars for it cannot be subject to arithmetical calculation so as to show their advantage or disadvantage, at least wars for trade, which have gain for their object, may be proper subjects for such computation; and a trading nation, as well as a single trader, ought to calculate the probabilities of profit and loss, before engaging in any considerable adventure. This however nations seldom do, and we have had frequent instances of their spending more money in wars for acquiring or securing branches of commerce, than

a hundred years' profit or the full enjoyment of them can compensate.

Remember me affectionately to good Dr. Price, and to the honest heretic, Dr. Priestly. I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not, like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them. Do not, however, mistake me. It is not to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, it is his honesty that has brought upon him the character of heretic. I am ever, my dear friend, yours sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

1742. TO FERDINAND GRAND¹ (P. C.)

Philad^a Oct. 24, 1788

MY DEAR FRIEND

The last Letter I have been favour'd with from you is of the 5th of May. But I had the Pleasure of hearing of your Welfare and that of the good Family; of a later Date by your Letter to my Grandson. I sometime ago receiv'd from a Mr. Ross the Sum you drew for upon him, with which you will therefore charge my Account. And I drew upon you in August last for Ten Thousand Livres in favour of Mas--rie and Company and also for Seventy-five Pounds Sterling in favour of Zantzinger to supply the Bills for the same Sum of the preceding Year which came back protested.

¹ From the original in the possession of Mr. Joseph Sabin. — ED.

I congratulate you on the Addition to your Family. I hope your young Brood will, like mine, be a Comfort to you in your old Age. Our public Affairs are getting into good Order. I hope yours are in the same way.

With sincere Esteem and Affection, I am

Ever yours

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. In the heart of our Debates on the new Constitution I wrote the enclos'd Paper. It is the only one I wrote on the Subject. It was said to have had some good Effect. If I shall be capable of remembering anything the Remembrance of your Friendship will be retained as having made too deep an Impression to be obliterated, and will ever as it always has done Afford me infinite Pleasure.

Adieu, Adieu,

B. FRANKLIN.

1743. TO MADAME HELVÉTIUS (L. C.)

Philad^e, Oct. 25, 88

JE ne peux pas laisser partir cette Occasion, ma chere Amie, sans vous dire que je vous aime toujours, & que je ne porte bien. Je pense continuellement des Plaisirs que j'ai joui dans la douce Société d'Auteuil. Et souvent dans mes Songes, je dejeune avec vous, je me place au coté de vous sur une de votre mille Sofas, ou je proméne avec vous dans votre belle jardin. Dites, si. v. p. à Messieurs vos bons Abbé, qu'étant actuellement libre des Affaires publiques, j'espere de devenir meilleur Correspondant, & que je les écrivai bientôt tous au long.

B. F.

1744. TO JEAN-BAPTISTE LE ROY (L. C.)

Philad^a, Oct. 25, 1788

MY DEAR FRIEND: — Your kind Letter of the 6th of May, after some Delay by the Way, is come safe to Hand, with the Memoirs, and elegant Prints of your projected Hospital, which I shall dispose of as you direct. It may in time to come be useful here. I receiv'd, also, the Volume of Academy Memoirs, and thank you for your Care in sending them.

I am now in Possession of the Repose I have so long wish'd for, having finish'd the third Year of the Presidentship, the Term limited by our Constitution, and resolving to engage no more in public Business; my Enjoyment of that Repose can, however, be but short, as I am now near 83.

We have no philosophical News here at present, except that a large Boat row'd by the force of Steam is now exercis'd upon our River, stems the Current, and seems to promise being useful when the Machinery can be more simplified and the Expençe reduced.

I am ever, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1745. TO DON DIEGO GARDOQUI¹ (L. C.)Philad^a, Oct. 26, 1788.

SIR: — Messrs. Henry Pawling and Greenberry Dawson one of whom will have the honour of presenting this to the hand of your Excellency, are projecting a Voyage from the

¹ Minister from the Court of Spain. — ED.

Ohio Settlements with the Produce of that Country, to be sold at New Orleans. I know not how far the Laws existing there admit of such Commerce; But if it is allowable, I would then beg leave to request that your Excell^y would be so good as to give them your Counsels with a Line of Protection. And as they are here esteemed Persons of honest Principles, who have good Characters, I am persuaded they will not forfeit them and show themselves unworthy of your Excellency's Favour by any contraband or illegal Practices.

With great and sincere Esteem and Respect, I am, Sir,
your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1746. TO JOSEPH ELAM¹ (A. P. S.)

Philad^a, Nov. 10, 1788.

SIR:—I received your note of the 8th instant, and being now, as you observe, retired to a private station, I hope to enjoy the repose appertaining to it. I cannot think, therefore of calling, as you propose, you and your accusers before me, to discuss differences which I have no authority to judge of or to determine. I can only give you my friendly advice, which is to behave peaceable and respectfully to the religious society you profess to be connected with, especially in their public assemblies; in which case I am persuaded you may quietly enjoy "that liberty of a freeholder and citizen" which you desire, without receiving from them the smallest interruption. By giving me no further trouble with your quarrels, you will oblige your well-wisher,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ A Virginian, mentally unbalanced, who from eccentric behaviour in Philadelphia was placed by the Quakers in a hospital. — ED.

1747. TO THE DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

(L. C.)

Philadelphia, Nov. 13, 1788.

DEAR FRIEND,

As the Bearer Mr. Sentris is not acquainted with our Friend Mr. Le Veillard, I take the Liberty of enclosing for him, under your Cover, the Memoirs which he has so long & earnestly demanded of me. I think your Character will be a Protection to them, and that under it they will be more likely of getting safe to hand. I send also my Paper on the American Debts, which, if I am not mistaken, you desired to see.

I am not without my Doubts concerning the Memoirs, whether it would be proper to publish them, or not, at least during my Life time. And I am persuaded there are many Things that would, in Case of Publication, be best omitted; I therefore request it most earnestly of you, my dear Friend, that you would examine them carefully & critically, with Mr. Le Veillard, and give me your candid & friendly Advice there-upon, as soon as you can conveniently. I should not venture to make this Request but that I hope your public Affairs, which must have taken up much of your Time, are now settled: I sincerely hope to the mutual Advantage of both King and Nation.

My best Wishes attend you and your amiable Family, and I beg you to believe that I am ever, with sincere Respect & Affection,

Dear Sir,

Your most obed^t and humb^e Serv^t.

B. FRANKLIN.

1748. TO FRANCIS CHILDS (L. C.)

Philad^a, Nov. 19. 1788.

SIR:— When you were here in April last you promis'd me the Payment of one hundred Dollars in June following, which has not been sent to me, and therefore I have now drawn upon you for the same, and having present Occasion for Money, I depend on your honouring my Draft. I am sir your humble Servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

1749. TO MRS. ELIZABETH PARTRIDGE (L. C.)

Philad^a, Nov. 25, 1788.

MY DEAR CHILD:— I received your kind Letter of the 12th Inst. inclosing one for Mr. Philip Vanhorn, Physician in Philadelphia, which you desire me to deliver, and to solicit the Forgiveness of his Daughter. I immediately made Enquiry for him, as to be instrumental in so charitable a Work, and in concurrence with you, would have given me great Pleasure, but I am assured by our oldest Inhabitants, who have had most Acquaintance and best Opportunities of knowing their fellow-Citizens, particularly some of our Physicians, that no Physician or other Person of that Name has ever been a Resident here; so that there must have been some Mistake in the Information that has been given you, if, indeed the whole Story is not an Imposition.

You kindly enquire after my Health. I have not, of late, much reason to boast of it. People that will live a long Life

and drink to the Bottom of the Cup must expect to meet some of the Dregs. However, when I consider how many more terrible Maladies the human Body is liable to, I think myself well off that I have only three incurable ones: the Gout, the Stone, and Old Age; and, those notwithstanding, I enjoy many comfortable Intervals, in which I forget all my Ills, and amuse myself in Reading or Writing, or in Conversation with Friends, joking, laughing, and telling merry Stories, as when you first knew me, a young Man about Fifty.

My Children and GrandChildren, the Baches, are all well, and pleased with your Remembrance of them. They are my Family, living in my House. And we have lately the Addition of a little good-natured Girl, whom I begin to love as well as the rest.

You tell me our poor Friend Ben Kent is gone;¹ I hope to the Regions of the Blessed, or at least to some Place where Souls are prepared for those Regions. I found my Hope on this, that tho' not so orthodox as you and I, he was an honest Man, and had his Virtues. If he had any Hypocrisy it was of that inverted kind, with which a Man is not so bad as he seems to be. And with regard to future Bliss I cannot help imagining, that Multitudes of the zealously Orthodox of different Sects, who at the last Day may flock together, in hopes of seeing [mutilated] damn'd, will be disappointed, and oblig'd to rest content with their own Salvation. You have no Occasion to apologize for your former Letter. It was, as all

¹ "Our Friend Mr Benjamin Kent has taken His departure but for what Land is uncertain He thought He should be one of the Happy Few that escaped Stopping at Purgatory I wish he may not be Mistaken but have arrived safe at the Elisian Fields." Elizabeth Partridge to Franklin, November 12, 1788.—ED.

yours are, very well written. That which it enclos'd for your Cousin came too late, he being sailed.

By one of the Accidents which War occasions, all my Books containing Copies of my Letters were lost. There were Eight Volumes of them, and I have been able to recover only two. Those are of later Date than the Transaction you mention, and therefore can contain nothing relating to it. If the Letter you want a Copy of was one in which I aim'd at consoling my Brother's Friends, by a Comparison drawn from a Party of Pleasure intended into the Country, where we were all to meet, tho' the Chair of one being soonest ready he set out before the rest; I say if this was the Letter, I fancy you may possibly find it in Boston, as I remember Dr. Biles once wrote me that many Copies had been taken of it. I, too, should have been glad to have seen that again, among others I had written to him and you. But you inform me they were eaten by the Mice. Poor little innocent Creatures, I am sorry they had no better Food. But since they like my Letters, here is another Treat for them.

Adieu, ma chere Enfant, and believe me [mutilated]
your affectionate Uncle,

B. FRANKLIN.

1750. TO MRS. JANE MECOM¹

Philadelphia, Nov. 26, 1788.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I received your kind letter of the 11th instant. The two former ones you mention, I had answered, though it seems

¹ Printed in part in "The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin" (1818), Vol. I, p. 245.—ED.

the answer had not reached you. If it has finally miscarried, I will look for the letters, and answer them again.

I am sorry you should suffer so much uneasiness with tears and apprehensions about my health. There are in life real evils enough, and it is a folly to afflict ourselves with imaginary ones; and it is time enough when the real ones arrive. I see by the papers that to-morrow is your thanksgiving day. The flour will arrive too late for your plum puddings, for I find it went from hence but a few days since. I hope, however, it will be with you before the winter shuts up your harbour.

I never see any Boston newspapers. You mention there being often something in them to do me honour. I am obliged to them. On the other hand, some of our papers here are endeavouring to disgrace me. I take no notice. My friends defend me. I have long been accustomed to receive more blame, as well as more praise, than I have deserved. It is the lot of every public man, and I leave one account to balance the other.

As you observe, there was no swearing in the story of the poker, when I told it. The late new dresser of it was, probably, the same, or perhaps akin to him, who, in relating a dispute that happened between Queen Anne and the Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning a vacant mitre, which the Queen was for bestowing on a person the Archbishop thought unworthy, made both the Queen and the Archbishop swear three or four thumping oaths in every sentence of the discussion, and the Archbishop at last gained his point. One present at this tale, being surprised, said, "But did the Queen and the Archbishop swear so at one another?" "O no, no," says the relator; "that is only *my way* of telling the story."

This family is all well at present, and join in love to you and yours, with your affectionate brother,

B. FRANKLIN.

1751. TO CYRUS GRIFFIN ¹

Philadelphia, November 29, 1788.

SIR,

When I had the honour of being the Minister of the United States at the court of France, Mr. Barclay, arriving there, brought me the following resolution of Congress.

“Resolved, that a commissioner be appointed by Congress with full power and authority to liquidate, and *finally to settle*, the accounts of all the servants of the United States, who have been intrusted with the expenditure of public money in Europe, and to commence and prosecute such suits, causes, and actions as may be necessary for that purpose, or for the recovery of any property of the said United States in the hands of any person, or persons, whatsoever.

“That the said commissioner be authorized to appoint one or more clerks, with such allowance as he may think reasonable.

“That the said commissioner and clerks, respectively, take an oath before some person duly authorized to administer an oath, faithfully to execute the trust reposed in them respectively.

“Congress proceeded to the election of a commissioner, and, ballots being taken, Mr. T. Barclay was elected.”

In pursuance of this resolution, and as soon as Mr. Barclay was at leisure from more pressing business, I rendered to him all my accounts, which he examined, and stated methodically. By this statement he found a balance due me on the 4th of May, 1785, of 7,533 livres, 19 sols, 3 den., which I accordingly received of the Congress banker; the difference between my statement and his being only seven sols, which

¹ President of Congress. Elected January 22, 1788. Printed from Sparks, Vol. X, p. 375. — ED.

by mistake I had overcharged; about three pence half penny sterling.

At my request, however, the accounts were left open for the consideration of Congress, and not finally settled, there being some articles on which I desired their judgment, and having some equitable demands, as I thought them, for extra services, which he had not conceived himself empowered to allow, and therefore I did not put them in my account. He transmitted the accounts to Congress, and had advice of their being received. On my arrival at Philadelphia, one of the first things I did was to despatch my grandson, William T. Franklin, to New York, to obtain a final settlement of those accounts; he, having long acted as my secretary, and being well acquainted with the transactions, was able to give an explanation of the articles, that might seem to require explaining, if any such there were. He returned without effecting the settlement, being told, that it could not be made till the arrival of some documents expected from France. What those documents were, I have not been informed, nor can I readily conceive, as all the vouchers existing there had been examined by Mr. Barclay. And I, having been immediately after my arrival engaged in the public business of this State, waited in expectation of hearing from Congress, in case any part of my accounts had been objected to.

It is now more than three years that those accounts have been before that honourable body, and, to this day, no notice of any such objection has been communicated to me. But reports have, for some time past, been circulated here, and propagated in the newspapers, that I am greatly indebted to the United States for large sums, that had been put into my hands, and that I avoid a settlement. This, together with

the little time one of my age may expect to live, makes it necessary for me to request earnestly, which I hereby do, that the Congress would be pleased, without further delay, to examine those accounts, and if they find therein any article or articles, which they do not understand or approve, that they would cause me to be acquainted with the same, that I may have an opportunity of offering such explanations or reasons in support of them as may be in my power, and then that the accounts may be finally closed.

I hope the Congress will soon be able to attend to this business for the satisfaction of the public, as well as in condescension to my request. In the mean time, if there be no impropriety in it, I would desire that this letter, together with another relating to the same subject, the copy of which is hereto annexed, may be put upon their minutes. With every sentiment of respect and duty to Congress, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

1752. TO WILLIAM VAUGHAN (L. C.)

Philadelphia, Dec. 9. 1788.

DEAR SIR: — I received your kind Letter of Oct. 5. I am glad the little Papers I sent you were not unacceptable. Having done with public Business, I am now employing myself in a Work your good Brother Benjamin once strongly recommended to me, which is writing the History of my own Life. This will contain a Number of Precepts of the kind you desire, and all exemplified by the Effects of their Practice in my own Affairs. Please to inform Benj^a of this, and that I have got as far as my fiftieth Year.

I thank you for the Trouble you took in the Enquiry of Mr. John Wright. I have written to him some time since that the Types are come to hand, etc.

A Friend of mine designing a Present to her Son, a young Student, of the best English Encyclopedia, has desired me to procure it for her. Since I left England several different Works under that title [have appeared], and I know not their Characters or merits. I think I have seen mentioned in the Advertisements one or two from Scotland. Will you be so good as to inform yourself, if you do not know already, which is the best and latest, and send it to me by one of the first Spring Ships.¹ Inclos'd is an Order on a Banking House for Payment. On looking at it, I see it was intended by the Lady that your Brother should be troubled with this Order. But 'tis the same thing, you can have his Opinion.

Our public Affairs are getting fast into Order, and we hope that in a Year or two more they may be perfectly settled. The bad Habits introduc'd by the war are also wearing out, and sober Industry and Frugality are taking Place of Idleness and Dissipation. It is pleasant to see the World growing better and happier, tho' one [torn] to quit it. Next Month, if I live to the middle of it, will finish my 83d Year. I have a good deal recover'd from my last Summer's Illness, and am at present, Thanks to God, pretty hearty, as well as all my Family, who join in rejoicing that your good Mother and Sisters, those amiable Girls, have also recover'd their usual Health. God bless and preserve you all, prays your affectionate Friend and humble Serv^t,

B. FRANKLIN.

¹ Mr. Vaughan sent Franklin a copy of Chambers' Encyclopædia, corrected by Dr. Reid. At the same time (Feb. 27, 1789) William Vaughan wrote that his brother knew of no *best* encyclopædia. — ED.

1753. TO ABBÉ MORELLET (L. C.)

Philada., Dec. 10, 1788.

DEAR FRIEND:—The Suspension of the Pacquet Boats has derang'd our Correspondence. It is long, very long since I have been favoured with a Line from Auteuil, and M. de Chaumont inform'd me lately that a Number of Letters which I had sent to New York to go by the Pacquet to France had been seen laying there many Months after, no Pacquet arriving by which they might be sent. Pray let me know whether you ever receiv'd my Remarks on the English Reasons for refusing to deliver up the Posts on our Frontiers? sent now near a Year since, in return for your excellent "Guichets" and "Nouvelles Cométologie," with which I have most agreeably entertain'd many of my Friends. I am, however, not without Resources in this Dearth of News from that Academy; for I often read over and over again, and always with fresh Pleasure, your and Abbé de la Roche's pleasing and instructive Letters of July, 1787; and the friendly affectionate *griffonage*, as she is pleased to call it, of that good Dame,¹ whom we all love, and whose Memory I shall love and honour as long as I have any Existence. And I sometimes dream of being in France, and visiting my Friends there, when those of Auteuil are never forgotten.

I send you herewith as a small Curiosity some Songs and Music of American Composition, the first Production of the kind that has appeared here. I fancy some of the Music may suit your taste, as it is simple and pathetic. The Poetry

¹ Madame Helvétius. — ED.

of one of the Songs pleases me particularly. It is the Vth. I wish you or Mr. Cabbanis would translate it, so as that it may be sung to the same Notes.

The Gentleman who will have the honour of delivering you this line, is Mr. Gouverneur Morris, formerly a Member of Congress, and one of the Convention that composed the Federal Constitution. He is much esteem'd here by those that know him, and being a Friend of mine, I beg leave to recommend him to your Civilities, and to M. Marmontel's, to whom please to present my Respects.

I hope the late Troubles in France are nearly over. 'Tis a country that I dearly love, and in whose Prosperity I feel myself deeply interested.

Having now finished my three years' Service as President, and not likely to engage in any future publick Business, I begin to feel myself a Freeman, and to enjoy the little Leisure that the Remnant of Life may afford me. Some of this Leisure I am, however, employing in writing my own History, which calling past Transactions to Remembrance makes it seem a little like living one's Life over again.

I am ever, my dear Friend, with great and sincere Esteem, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

1754. TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

Philadelphia, Dec. 29, 1788.

DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Inclos'd I send a Letter to the President of Congress for the time being, which, if you find nothing improper in it, or

¹ Printed in the Proceedings of the New York Historical Society. — ED.

that in regard for me you would wish changed or amended, I would request you to present. I rely much on your friendly counsel, as you must be better acquainted with persons and circumstances than I am; and I suppose there will be time enough before the new Congress is formed to make any alterations you may advise, tho' if presented at all, it should be to the old one.

In the copy of my letter to Mr. Barclay you may observe, that mention is made of some "considerable Articles which I have not charged in my accounts with Congress, but on which I should expect from their equity some consideration." That you may have some information what those articles are, I enclose a "*Sketch of my Services to the United States*," wherein you will find mention of the *extra services* I performed, that do not appertain to the office of Plenipotentiary, viz: as Judge of Admiralty, as Consul before the arrival of Mr. Barclay, as Banker in examining and accepting the multitude of Bills of Exchange, and as Secretary for several years, none being sent to me, tho' other ministers were allowed such assistance.

I must own, I did hope, that, as it is customary in Europe to make some liberal provision for ministers when they return home from foreign service during which their absence is necessarily injurious to their private affairs, the Congress would at least have been kind enough to have shewn their approbation of my conduct by a grant of some small tract of Land in their Western Country, which might have been of use and some honour to my Posterity. And I cannot but still think they will do something of the kind for me, whenever they shall be pleased to take my services into consideration; as I see by their minutes that they have allowed Mr. Lee handsomely

for his service in England, before his appointment to France, in which service I and Mr. Bollan coöperated with him, and have had no such allowance; and, since his return, he has been very properly rewarded with a good place, as well as my friend Mr. Jay; tho' these are trifling compensations in comparison with what was granted by the King to Mr. Gérard on his return from America.

But how different is what has happened to me! On my return from England, [in 1775,] the Congress bestowed on me the office of PostMaster-General, for which I was very thankful. It was indeed an office I had some kind of right to, as having previously greatly enlarged the Revenue of the Post by the Regulations I had contrived and established, while I possessed it under the Crown. When I was sent to France, I left it in the hands of my Son-in-Law, who was to act as my Deputy. But soon after my departure, it was taken from me, and given to Mr. Hazard. When the English Ministry formerly thought fit to deprive me of the office, they left me, however, the privilege of receiving and sending my letters free of postage, which is the usage when a Postmaster is not displaced for malfeasance in the office; but in America I have ever since had the postage demanded of me, which, since my return from France, has amounted to about £50, much of it occasioned by my having acted as Minister there.

When I took my grandson, W. T. Franklin, with me to France, I purposed, after giving him the French language, to educate him in the study and practice of the Law. But by the repeated expectation given me of a Secretary, and constant disappointment, I was induced, and indeed obliged, to retain him with me, to assist in the Secretary's office, which disappointments continued till my return, by which time, so

many years of the opportunity of his studying the Law were lost, and his habits of life become so different, that it appeared no longer advisable; and I then, considering him as brought up in the diplomatic line, and well qualified by his knowledge in that branch for the employ of a Secretary at least, (in which opinion I was not alone, for three of my colleagues, without the smallest solicitation from me, chose him Secretary of the Commission for Treaties, which they had been empowered to do,) I took the liberty of recommending him to the Congress for their protection. This was the only favour I ever asked of them; and the only answer I received was a Resolution superseding him, and appointing Col. Humphreys in his place; a gentleman, tho' he might have indeed a good deal of military merit, certainly had none in the diplomatic line, and had neither the French language, or the experience, or the address proper to qualify him for such an employment.

This is all to yourself only as a private friend; for I have not, nor ever shall, make any public complaint; and even if I could have foreseen such unkind treatment from Congress as their refusing me their thanks would not in the least have abated my zeal for the Cause, and ardour in support of it. For I know something of the nature of such changeable Assemblies, and how little successors are inform'd of the services that have been rendered to the Corps before their admission, or feel themselves obliged for such services; and what effect in obliterating a sense of them, during the absence of the servant in a distant Country, the artful and reiterated malevolent insinuations of one or two envious and malicious persons may have on the minds of members, even of the most equitable, candid, and honourable dispositions. Therefore I would pass these reflections into oblivion.

My good friend, excuse, if you can, the trouble of this letter; and if the reproach thrown on republics, that *they are apt to be ungrateful*, should ever unfortunately be verified with respect to *your* services, remember that you have a right to unbosom yourself in communicating your griefs to your ancient friend and most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

Sketch of the Services of B. Franklin to the United States of America

In England, he combated the Stamp Act, and his writings in the papers against it, with his examination in Parliament, were thought to have contributed much to its repeal.

He opposed the Duty Act; and, though he could not prevent its passing, he obtained of Mr. Townshend an omission of several articles, particularly salt.

In the subsequent difference he wrote and published many papers, refuting the claim of Parliament to tax the colonies.

He opposed all the oppressive acts.

He had two secret negotiations with the ministers for their repeal, of which he has written a narrative. In this he offered payment for the destroyed tea, at his own risk, in case they were repealed.

He was joined with Messrs. Bollan and Lee in all the applications to government for that purpose. Printed several pamphlets at his own considerable expense against the then measures of government, whereby he rendered himself obnoxious, was disgraced before the privy council, deprived of a place in the postoffice of £ 300 sterling a year, and obliged to resign his agencies, viz.

of Pennsylvania	.	.	.	£ 500
of Massachusetts	.	.	.	400
of New Jersey	.	.	.	100
of Georgia	.	.	.	200
				£ 1200

In the whole £ 1500 sterling per annum.

Orders were sent to the King's governors not to sign any warrants on the treasury for the orders of his salaries; and, though he was not actually dismissed by the colonies that employed him, yet, thinking the known malice of the court against him rendered him less likely than others to manage their affairs to their advantage, he judged it to be his duty to withdraw from their

service, and leave it open for less exceptionable persons, which saved them the necessity of removing him.

Returning to America, he encouraged the Revolution. Was appointed chairman of the Committee of Safety, where he projected the *chevaux de frise* for securing Philadelphia, then the residence of Congress.

Was sent by Congress to head-quarters near Boston with Messrs. Harrison and Lynch, in 1775, to settle some affairs with the northern governments and General Washington.

In the spring of 1776, was sent to Canada with Messrs. Chase and Carroll, passing the Lakes while they were not yet free from ice. In Canada, was, with his colleagues, instrumental in redressing sundry grievances, and thereby reconciling the people more to our cause. He there advanced to General Arnold and other servants of Congress, then in extreme necessity, £ 353 in gold, out of his own pocket, on the credit of Congress, which was of great service at that juncture, in procuring provisions for our army.

Being at the time he was ordered on this service upwards of seventy years of age, he suffered in his health by the hardships of this journey ; lodging in the woods, &c., in so inclement a season ; but, being recovered, the Congress in the same year ordered him to France. Before his departure, he put all the money he could raise, between three and four thousand pounds, into their hands ; which, demonstrating his confidence, encouraged others to lend their money in support of the cause.

He made no bargain for appointments, but was promised by a vote, the *net* salary of £ 500 sterling per annum, his expense paid, and to be assisted by a secretary, who was to have £ 1000 per annum, to include all contingencies.

When the Pennsylvania Assembly sent him to England in 1764, on the same salary, they allowed him one year's advance for his passage, and in consideration of the prejudice to his private affairs that must be occasioned by his sudden departure and absence. He has had no such allowance from Congress, was badly accommodated in a miserable vessel, improper for those northern seas, (and which actually foundered in her return,) was badly fed, so that on his arrival he had scarce strength to stand.

His services to the States as commissioner, and afterwards as minister plenipotentiary are known to Congress, as may appear in his correspondence. His *extra services* may not be so well known, and therefore may be here mentioned. No secretary ever arriving, the business was in part before, and entirely when the other commissioners left him, executed by himself, with the help of his grandson, who at first was only allowed clothes, board, and lodging, and afterwards a salary, never exceeding £ 300 a year, (except while he served as secretary to the Commissioners for peace,) by which difference in salary, continued many years, the Congress saved, *if they accept it* £ 700 sterling a year.

He served as *consul* entirely several years, till the arrival of Mr. Barclay,

and even after, as that gentleman was obliged to be much and long absent in Holland, Flanders, and England ; during which absence, what business of the kind occurred, still came to Mr. Franklin.

He served, though without any special commission for the purpose, as a *judge of admiralty*; for, the Congress having sent him a quantity of blank commissions for privateers, he granted them to cruisers fitted out in the ports of France, some of them manned by old smugglers, who knew every creek on the coast of England, and, running all round the island, distressed the British coasting trade exceedingly, and raised their general insurance. One of those privateers alone, the *Black Prince*, took in the course of a year seventy-five sail ! All the papers, taken in each prize brought in, were in virtue of an order of council sent up to Mr. Franklin, who was to examine them, judge of the legality of the capture, and write to the admiralty of the port, that he found the prize good, and that the sale might be permitted. These papers, which are very voluminous, he has to produce.

He served also as *merchant*, to make purchases, and direct the shipping of stores to a very great value, for which he has charged no commission.

But the part of his service which was the most fatiguing and confining, was that of receiving and accepting, after a due and necessary examination, the bills of exchange drawn by Congress for interest money, to the amount of *two millions and a half of livres annually* ; multitudes of the bills very small, each of which, the smallest, gave as much trouble in examining, as the largest. And this careful examination was found absolutely necessary, from the constant frauds attempted by presenting *seconds* and *thirds* for payment after the *firsts* had been discharged. As these bills were arriving more or less by every ship and every post, they required constant attendance. Mr. Franklin could make no journey for exercise, as had been annually his custom, and the confinement brought on a malady that is likely to afflict him while he lives.

In short, though he has always been an active man, he never went through so much business during eight years, in any part of his life, as during those of his residence in France ; which however he did not decline till he saw peace happily made, and found himself in the eightieth year of his age ; when, if ever, a man has some right to expect repose.

1755. TO THE EDITOR OF THE FEDERAL
GAZETTE

A COMPARISON OF THE CONDUCT OF THE ANCIENT JEWS AND
OF THE ANTI-FEDERALISTS IN THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA.¹ (L. C.)

A ZEALOUS Advocate for the propos'd Federal Constitution, in a certain public Assembly, said, that "the Repugnance of a great part of Mankind to good Government was such, that he believed, that, if an angel from Heaven was to bring down a Constitution form'd there for our Use, it would nevertheless meet with violent Opposition." He was reprov'd for the suppos'd Extravagance of the Sentiment; and he did not justify it. Probably it might not have immediately occur'd to him, that the Experiment had been try'd, and that the Event was recorded in the most faithful of all Histories, the Holy Bible; otherwise he might, as it seems to me, have supported his Opinion by that unexceptionable Authority.

The Supreme Being had been pleased to nourish up a single Family, by continued Acts of his attentive Providence, till it became a great People; and, having rescued them from Bondage by many Miracles, performed by his Servant Moses, he personally deliver'd to that chosen Servant, in the presence of the whole Nation, a Constitution and Code of Laws for their Observance; accompanied and sanction'd with Promises

¹ From an auto. draft signed "K," in L. C. — ED.

of great Rewards, and Threats of severe Punishments, as the Consequence of their Obedience or Disobedience.

This Constitution, tho' the Deity himself was to be at its Head (and it is therefore call'd by Political Writers a *Theocracy*), could not be carried into Execution but by the Means of his Ministers; Aaron and his Sons were therefore commission'd to be, with Moses, the first establish'd Ministry of the new Government.

One would have thought, that this Appointment of Men, who had distinguish'd themselves in procuring the Liberty of their Nation, and had hazarded their Lives in openly opposing the Will of a powerful Monarch, who would have retain'd that Nation in Slavery, might have been an Appointment acceptable to a grateful People; and that a Constitution fram'd for them by the Deity himself might, on that Account, have been secure of a universal welcome Reception. Yet there were in every one of the *thirteen Tribes* some discontented, restless Spirits, who were continually exciting them to reject the propos'd new Government, and this from various Motives.

Many still retained an Affection for Egypt, the Land of their Nativity; and these, whenever they felt any Inconvenience or Hardship, tho' the natural and unavoidable Effect of their Change of Situation, exclaim'd against their Leaders as the Authors of their Trouble; and were not only for returning into Egypt, but for stoning their deliverers.¹ Those inclin'd to idolatry were displeas'd that their *Golden Calj* was destroy'd. Many of the Chiefs thought the new Constitution might be injurious to their particular Interests, that the *profitable Places* would be engrossed by the Families and

¹ Numbers, ch. xiv.

Friends of Moses and Aaron, and others equally well-born excluded.¹ In Josephus and the Talmud, we learn some Particulars, not so fully narrated in the Scripture. We are there told, “That Corah was ambitious of the Priesthood, and offended that it was conferred on Aaron; and this, as he said, by the Authority of Moses only, *without the Consent of the People*. He accus’d Moses of having, by various Artifices, fraudulently obtain’d the Government, and depriv’d the People of their Liberties; and of *conspiring* with Aaron to perpetuate the Tyranny in their Family. Thus, tho’ Corah’s real Motive was the Supplanting of Aaron, he persuaded the People that he meant only the *Public Good*; and they, moved by his Insinuations, began to cry out, ‘Let us maintain the Common Liberty of our *respective Tribes*; we have freed ourselves from the Slavery impos’d on us by the Egyptians, and shall we now suffer ourselves to be made Slaves by Moses? If we must have a Master, it were better to return to Pharaoh, who at least fed us with Bread and Onions, than to serve this new Tyrant, who by his Operations has brought us into Danger of Famine.’ Then they called in question the *Reality of his Conference* with God; and objected the *Privacy of the Meetings*, and the *preventing any of the People from being present* at the Colloquies, or even approaching the Place, as Grounds of great Suspicion. They accused Moses also of *Peculation*; as embezzling part of the Golden Spoons and the Silver Chargers, that the Princes had offer’d at the Dedication of the Altar,² and the Offerings of Gold by the

¹ Numbers, ch. xiv, verse 3. “And they gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, ‘Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, *every one of them*; wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation?’”

² Numbers, ch. vii.

common People,¹ as well as most of the Poll-Tax;² and Aaron they accus'd of pocketing much of the Gold of which he pretended to have made a molten Calf. Besides *Peculation*, they charg'd Moses with *Ambition*; to gratify which Passion he had, they said, deceiv'd the People, by promising to bring them *to* a land flowing with Milk and Honey; instead of doing which, he had brought them *from* such a Land; and that he thought light of all this mischief, provided he could make himself an *absolute Prince*.³ That, to support the new Dignity with Splendor in his Family, the partial Poll-Tax already levied and given to Aaron⁴ was to be follow'd by a general one,⁵ which would probably be augmented from time to time, if he were suffered to go on promulgating new Laws, on pretence of new occasional Revelations of the divine Will, till their whole Fortunes were devour'd by that Aristocracy."

Moses deny'd the Charge of Peculation; and his Accusers were destitute of Proofs to support it; tho' *Facts*, if real, are in their Nature capable of Proof. "I have not," said he (with holy Confidence in the Presence of his God), "I have not taken from this People the value of an Ass, nor done them any other Injury." But his Enemies had made the Charge, and with some Success among the Populace; for no kind of Accusation is so readily made, or easily believ'd, by Knaves as the Accusation of Knavery.

In fine, no less than two hundred and fifty of the principal Men, "famous in the Congregation, Men of Renown,"⁶

¹ Exodus, ch. xxxv, verse 22.

² Numbers, ch. iii, and Exodus, ch. xxx.

³ Numbers, ch. xvi, verse 13. "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?"

⁴ Numbers, ch. iii.

⁵ Exodus, ch. xxx.

⁶ Numbers, ch. xvi.

heading and exciting the Mob, worked them up to such a pitch of Frenzy, that they called out, "Stone 'em, stone 'em, and thereby *secure our Liberties*; and let us chuse other Captains, that may lead us back into Egypt, in case we do not succeed in reducing the Canaanites!"

On the whole, it appears, that the Israelites were a People jealous of their newly-acquired Liberty, which Jealousy was in itself no Fault; but, when they suffer'd it to be work'd upon by artful Men, pretending Public Good, with nothing really in view but private Interest, they were led to oppose the Establishment of the *New Constitution*, whereby they brought upon themselves much Inconvenience and Misfortune. It appears further, from the same inestimable History, that, when after many Ages that Constitution was become old and much abus'd, and an Amendment of it was propos'd, the populace, as they had accus'd Moses of the Ambition of making himself a *Prince*, and cried out, "Stone him, stone him;" so, excited by their High Priests and SCRIBES, they exclaim'd against the Messiah, that he aim'd at becoming King of the Jews, and cry'd out, "*Crucify him, Crucify him.*" From all which we may gather, that popular Opposition to a public Measure is no Proof of its Impropriety, even tho' the Opposition be excited and headed by Men of Distinction.

To conclude, I beg I may not be understood to infer, that our General Convention was divinely inspired, when it form'd the new federal Constitution, merely because that Constitution has been unreasonably and vehemently opposed; yet I must own I have so much Faith in the general Government of the world by *Providence*, that I can hardly conceive a Transaction of such momentous Importance to the Welfare of Millions now existing, and to exist in the Posterity

of a great Nation, should be suffered to pass without being in some degree influenc'd, guided, and governed by that omnipotent, omnipresent, and beneficent Ruler, in whom all inferior Spirits live, and move, and have their Being.

B. F.

NAZARETH COLLEGE OF ROCHESTER



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